JUNE 1954

COMMENTARY

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The Study of Man
Paul, the Horror Comics, and Dr. Wertham — ROBERT WARSHOW

BOOKS IN REVIEW

Irving Kristol — Dan Jacobson — Herbert J. Gans

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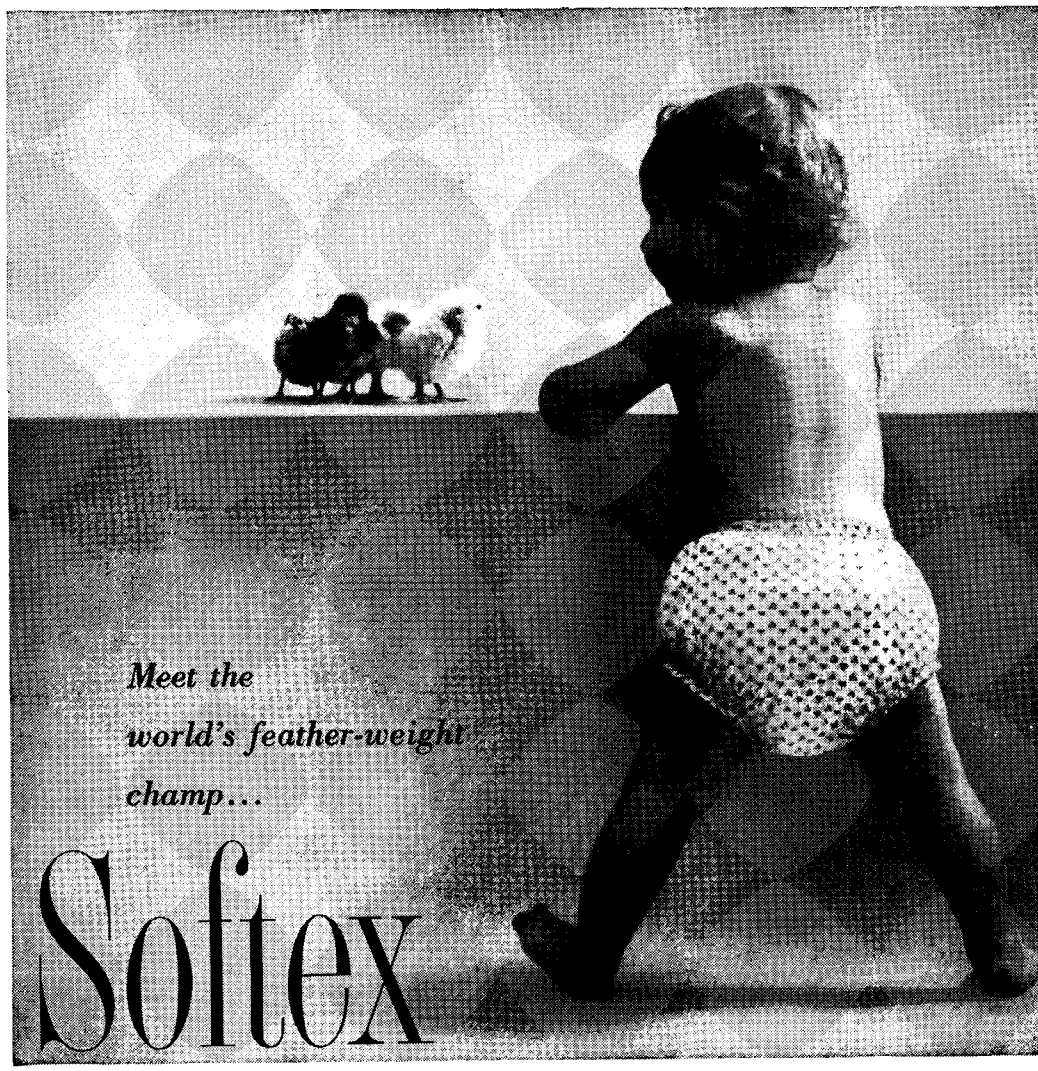

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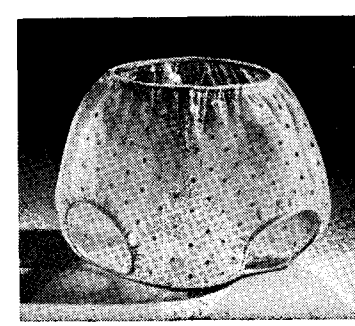

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

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The so-called détente which followed Stalin's death did not end the drive against Jews behind the Iron Curtain. Mr. Meyer reports on continuing anti-Jewish measures in Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Hungary.

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Telling the story of his visit to Israel as guest-conductor of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Mr. Leinsdorf offers some fascinating glimpses of the world of music in a country where culture is taken with intense — and sometimes deadly — seriousness.

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An amusing story, with a very pointed moral for the U.S. State Department today, illustrating the mastery of the Arab ruling classes in playing one Western country off against the other.

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COMMENTARY

THE CRISIS IN U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

Can the Democracies Surmount the New Soviet Diplomacy?

SIDNEY HERTZBERG

THE frustration of Franco-American efforts in Indo-China has confirmed a suspicion growing for some time now that U.S. foreign policy simply isn't working.

The realization is particularly provoking in view of the fact that there has been broad agreement on the basic elements of this policy among Americans who accept the inevitability and responsibility of our leadership in the world. This policy, under both Truman and Eisenhower, has been to build an anti-Communist alliance supported by military might, economic improvement, democratic propaganda, and the miscellaneous arts of diplomacy.

Even as to the specifics of the general policy there have been surprisingly few differences among the main body of its supporters. Some foreign-policy discussions have resounded across the country: the Great Debate over Yalta and China, the Bricker amendment, Dulles's "new look." These controversies sometimes clarified, sometimes obfuscated, sometimes revealed a mood. Invariably, they confused and worried our allies. But, for all their noise, they have left the main lines of our foreign policy intact.

Nor has there been any lack of energy in carrying out our policies. We have handed out more wealth than was spent on all the conquests in the history of man. We have done much to prevent world economic collapse. We have helped to rearm dozens of nations and we have access to military bases around the world. We are constantly winning voting contests in the United Nations. We have a network of alliances with almost all the countries in non-Communist Europe and with all those in Latin America. We are as one with Canada. We have military-aid pacts with Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Japan, Korea. We have Point Four agreements in the most exotic places. Indeed the archives of the State Department

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THE present Indo-Chinese crisis again reminds the free world of something which it apparently strives desperately to forget—that the Communist drive to dominate the world is unrelenting, and not to be conjured out of existence. Once more our foreign policy has proved inadequate, indeed seems now to have deteriorated almost to the point of collapse. SIDNEY HERTZBERG tries to analyze why this has happened, and points to the missing vital ingredient that must be supplied if Communism is to be defeated. Mr. Hertzberg has been a foreign correspondent for the New York *Times*, and on the staff of *Current History* and *Time* Magazine; he was also editor of *Common Sense*. During the first two years of COMMENTARY's existence, Mr. Hertzberg wrote for us a monthly review of world political developments. He is at present correspondent in the United States for the *Hindustan Times* of New Delhi.

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are overflowing with documentary evidence of the most intricate and far-flung diplomatic concert in history.

This should give us deep satisfaction. Despite the clamor and untidiness of our democratic system, we evolved what seemed a clear answer to an enormous threat. Nobody has come up with alternatives that have impressed us enough to make us turn from this policy. In short, we know what we want to do and we seem to be doing it—and in a cause whose justness seems to us ludicrously self-evident. Nevertheless we are frustrated and sick with a sense of doom.

THE trouble is not merely that the Soviet threat stubbornly refuses to collapse. The solemn fact is that the free-world alliance, on which our entire strategy rests, is weaker today than it has ever been, despite all the signatures on the dotted lines.

The evidence of the alliance's weakness can be seen all around us if we will lift our eyes from the documents. It is reported that we are well regarded in Turkey, Thailand, and the Dominican Republic. Almost everywhere else we are mistrusted. An effective alliance does not require that we as a people be liked by the people we are allied with. It does require a firm popular belief in the purposes of the alliance and in our integrity as the most powerful member of it. These conditions are lacking and their absence throws doubt on the value of all the treaties we have filed away in Washington.

The recent inter-American anti-Communist resolution adopted in Caracas was a mathematical triumph. It was "supported" by seventeen "nations" out of twenty. The assorted Latin American dictators, strong-arm men, and democrats who approved it did so, except for the Dominican representative, without enthusiasm. They then proceeded zestfully to problems of economic improvement, racial equality, and colonial rule; in none of these fields did U. S. spokesmen make a substantial contribution. Can we assume that the men who signed the formal anti-Communist commitment are willing or able to undertake effective measures to carry it out, or that the Communists themselves will be frightened off by it? What relation does this paper triumph have to Communist gains in Guatemala made by exploitation of our old record of imperialist intervention and of our resistance to the basic reforms for which the Communists take credit?

In deciding to arm Pakistan, we knew we would add a deep and abiding emotional flavor to Indian anti-Americanism. The most we could hope for was a counterbalancing advantage in Pakistan; we seem to have missed even this. We hastened the announcement of our military aid in the hope that it would help Prime Minister Mohammed Ali's Moslem League in the elections in East Bengal, which is the more populous and more developed part of Pakistan. But the Moslem League was not simply repudiated in the elections; it was wiped out as a legal party. This result didn't necessarily demonstrate that the Pakistanis are against American military aid. It did prove at least that their minds were on other things. The Pakistan pact is a painful illustration of our preoccupation with documents and our ineptitude with social forces.

Nor has the free world won the loyalty of Japan's millions because Prime Minister Yoshida signed a mutual security pact with the United States. Rearmament is vastly unpopular in Japan. Wherever an alliance with the United States is entered into reluctantly, anti-Americanism grows as a political asset.

Our older security sector, in Europe, is stagnating. The European Defense Community, which we regard as the core of North Atlantic security, remains a hope. German rearmament, under any conditions, is losing support in England, our indispensable ally. European economic recovery, which we have decided no longer needs our aid, is still incomplete and its benefits remain undiffused among the people.

The Middle East is more than ever a caldron of hatred, degradation, and violence from which any commitment to the free world would be fatuous. In Africa, France continues to concoct a classical colonial ex-

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plosion in the North, the Boers pursue a suicidal urge in the South, and in Central Africa British skill in dealing with nationalist passions is faltering.

THE current disillusionment with our foreign policy could become useful if it led to a more realistic evaluation of collective military security. We have been so busy piling up military compacts that we have not, until fairly recently, given any sustained thought to how they would actually operate at the crucial moment. There seems to have been an over-simple assumption that, at an agreed signal, the free world would spring into perfectly coordinated action to crush the aggressor.

No precedent exists in history for this assumption. Nations faced with the decision of war or peace don't necessarily follow previously drawn blueprints—national or international. They act, rather, on considerations of the moment, and through governments of the moment, with old treaties only one of the many guiding factors. This will certainly be true when nations know in advance that the price of war is unimaginable. Nor can we assume that the Soviets will obligingly present the kind of clear and final military challenge to the free world that would eliminate all hesitation.

The confusion revealed by the "new look" controversy gives our allies the right to ask the same question of us that we might ask of them. Here we are, both pilot and powerhouse of the grand alliance. Yet we are still asking ourselves: at what point and by whom is the order given to open fire—and what kind of fire do we set off?

We will not allow ourselves to be nibbled to death by small wars, says Vice President Nixon. What can he mean? If American soldiers who are already involved in Indo-China as "non-combatants" find themselves, by accident or design, shooting at Vietminh troops, and the Chinese Communists use this as an excuse to send more "volunteers" into battle, do we unleash our strategic air force? Do we do whatever we do by decision of the Commander-in-Chief? Do we do it after Congressional consideration? Is Eisenhower really prepared to call on the nation to launch the atomic Armageddon in answer to a Communist "nibble" in Indo-China, in Malaya, in Ladakh? And if he is, and the people approve, would we have the support of the United Nations, of our closer allies, even of the French, who, it says here in the program, are conducting the war in Indo-China? Would we have the support of the British who are responsible for Malaya, or of the Indians who are the defenders of Ladakh? It is in such trying, marginal ways that our military patience will be tested, not in dramatic challenges.

These are questions the administration will not, because it cannot, answer. Eventually, the promulgators of the "new look" themselves deflated it. Driven by questions at press conferences, Eisenhower said he could decide what to do only on the basis of the actual situation before him, while Dulles narrowed his new panacea to reliance on "deterrent" power. Truman and Acheson could agree fully.

In the end, the purely military aspects of the free-world alliance involve a certain fatalism. We must have enough military strength to make an all-out war deadly to Communist aggressors. So long as we have it, we assume they will not start such a war. If they do, our military policy will have failed; it is based on the assumption it will prevent war. We would presumably try to "win" the war. But we don't let our minds dwell much on the results; we don't even take our civil defense preparations seriously.

We must have this military security because we can only assume that its absence would invite our destruction. But its presence does not assure the checking of Communist expansion; it only provides the basis for survival. We have no right to assume that the Communists, now or ever, intend to carry out their designs by military methods that would risk total retaliation by us. But Communist military strength—merely by its existence, not use—is a powerful weapon because it imposes on us the burdens of matching strength. It also provides the basis for

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Communist conquest by other means. So must our capacity for military retaliation free us to meet the threat of such conquest by other means.

Perhaps, with the thermonuclear shot available to both sides, we have reached the ultimate in armament. We are presumably within sight of a comparatively inexpensive atomic device so powerful that no one would dare test it. With both sides capable of total destruction, the arms race would be over. Both sides could remain at ease on their atomic piles while the global struggle shifted to the non-military terrain.

IN ANY case, there can be no doubt that we are now facing a period in which the Communists will emphasize non-military weapons. In spite of unfinished military business in Indo-China, we have already entered upon a partial *détente*.

Out of the speculation about Soviet purposes since Stalin's death, only one thing seems clear: the Communists are encouraging a mood of relaxation. Basic aims have not changed. Moscow will give up nothing. But it will seek to "ease tension" by ordering its diplomats to smile instead of frown, by participating in conferences, by offering trade.

This development, which we must assume presages a Soviet effort to win by means other than overt aggression, is one we should welcome. Actually, it faces the free world with its gravest crisis.

Whatever effectiveness the free-world alliance has had has stemmed largely from the overt aggression of Communism and from the expectation of more to come. Physically expanding Communism alerted free people. The continuation of the threat justified the sacrifices necessary to support armament, and reduced some of the obstacles to unity.

With the onset of a *détente*, this spur to unity is withdrawn. So desperate are people for an end to their burdens, so anxious are they to believe the struggle is over, that they are likely to see a *détente* where none exists. Then it will become almost impossible for them to return to a posture of defense if and when the Communists resume the offensive.

Up to now, despite all the weaknesses already noted, it could be said that the free-world alliance had at least a negative unity. Peoples and statesmen may have committed themselves to the rigors of the anti-Communist alliance reluctantly. But they had to; there was no other way to survival. Despite dissension and suspicion, the alliance presumably would have acted effectively in the event of Soviet aggression. But a *détente* will be the signal for a general lowering of defenses—military, ideological, and emotional. And it removes the restraints on dissension within the non-Communist world.

What is likely to happen to the alliance once the discipline imposed by the immediate threat of Soviet aggression is relaxed? Some evidence is already in hand.

THE most urgent crisis today is Indo-China. Let us trace certain consequences the *détente* has already realized from this crisis.

The keystone of the Atlantic arch, we have decided, is the European Defense Community. The key to the keystone is French approval of EDC, a matter that has been pending for two years. The Geneva conference aroused French hopes of peace in Indo-China. One reason the French want such a peace is that it would mean recalling from Indo-China enough French forces to balance the German forces envisaged by EDC. But, the French felt, approval of EDC before the Geneva conference might have ruffled Moscow and stiffened it against peace in Indo-China. Therefore EDC had to wait. The extraordinary assumption behind this seems to have been that the Communists could be jockeyed into agreeing to peace in Indo-China so that the French would be free to go ahead with EDC. The Communists, of course, have only to keep growling at EDC and unleashing new offensives in Indo-China in order to keep France on tenterhooks of expectation, while EDC expires.

This treadmill was already in operation at the Berlin conference. Bidault, though no great enthusiast for EDC, is committed to it. The only visible alternative to him as French

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foreign minister was a dedicated opponent of EDC. Therefore Bidault had to be kept in office. He could not have been kept in office after the Berlin conference unless he brought back some hope of peace in Indo-China. This he did in the form of the conference at Geneva. But the Geneva conference was the excuse for "delaying" EDC ratification, and so we were back where we started from.

The treadmill will no doubt remain in operation at Geneva. Bidault, the ostensibly indispensable man for EDC, has resisted any loosening of the French Union, of which the Indo-Chinese states are unwilling and unequal members. But, without an unconditional and irrevocable promise of full independence to the Indo-Chinese, which Bidault opposes, any settlement will invite ultimate Communist victory.

In this situation, the one sure loser, besides the Indo-Chinese, is the United States. EDC is a French invention. We accepted the war in Indo-China as a bitter responsibility despite French imperialist greed and stupidity. We have supported both EDC and the French in Indo-China in good faith. Now, the fact that we still take them seriously is held against us; by some strange neutralist alchemy, continued American pressure for EDC in the face of the bliss promised by a *détente* makes us the instigators of war in Europe.

We supported the French in Indo-China in the hope that defeat of the Communists would be swiftly followed by the departure of the French, thus eliminating both French *and* Communist imperialism. Today, the likeliest application of a *détente* in Indo-China is partition. And there is no evidence that the French can institute the kind of independent Indo-Chinese regimes which could successfully resist infiltration by the Communist Vietminh. At best, the perspective would be indefinite military control by the French in the south and by the Communists in the north. Thus Indo-China would be saddled, not with one kind of imperialism, but with two in conflict. Yet if we resist this solution, we will be the instigators of war in Asia; we—not the French, who have hobbled the struggle against Communist totalitarianism with their senseless colonialism—will bear the brunt of Asian imprecations against Western imperialism.

Nor should it be assumed that EDC, even if reluctantly adopted by the French and Italians, would automatically become an effective instrument of defense. At least in the beginning, the mere fact that their troops will be serving under the same command with the Germans will mean restless moments among the French. EDC can remain a piece of paper even after it is ratified. It can become something more only as a reflection of European willingness to unite, which has never been strong and will be weakened further by a *détente*.

But if adoption of EDC doesn't guarantee positive gains, its defeat or indefinite postponement insures negative results. In every country in Europe, abandonment of EDC would be a triumph for Communists and nationalists, and a setback for those who have wanted, not only European military cooperation, but also the European political and economic community that has been the dream of progressive statesmen for decades. In France, abandonment of EDC would be a boon to those who are still intoxicated with the grandeur of France as an imperial power. In Germany it would not really gratify the Social Democrats. Though they made political capital out of opposition to EDC, its defeat would leave them rudderless, for they have no realistic alternative to EDC as a means to control German militarism yet induct Germany into the concert of European nations as an equal. Rather, it would strengthen German nationalists who want independent German rearmament.

These results are probable because the United States and European-minded Europeans have set so much store by EDC. Indeed it is possible that Moscow's opposition to EDC springs less from fear of its military aspects than of its political and economic implications. Moscow's tactic is to divide Europe. Up to now, Western Europe's internal conflicts have hampered effective

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military unity even when the Soviet military threat was most obvious. The *détente* is nicely timed to bury EDC and cripple NATO. And Communist offers of trade, which is the economic aspect of the *détente*, will further delay economic integration.

In Japan, the *détente* would increase pressure for unrestrained trade with mainland China, and reduce further the already reluctant willingness to rearm.

Throughout South Asia, the overseas Chinese would fall under the complete domination of Peking, and their effectiveness as instruments of Communist penetration would be strengthened. Communist movements in these countries, with or without the overseas Chinese, would gain in prestige. Right now the non-Communist parties of this area are not merely neutralist in outlook, but anxious to make excuses for Peking and Moscow. The *détente* would give Asian Communists new influence and weaken the resistance of non-Communist parties to popular fronts. If the Communist homelands achieve respectability, how long can domestic Communists be kept at arm's length? And how long before the highly disciplined Communist parties take over the popular fronts from the pulpy agglomerations which most non-Communist Asian parties are?

How long before popular fronts become irresistible in France and Italy, because of weariness with trying to find viable combinations of non-Communist parties as well as readiness to accept the most superficial evidence that the Communists have changed? How long before the Communists consolidate their control of government apparatus and mass organizations, long weakened by previous popular fronts, to the point where their divided opposition is helpless?

ONE of the main characteristics of neutralism is the notion that the Soviets are acting out of fear of the West, that Moscow may be naughty, misguided, and exasperating, but only because it is misunderstood, and frightened. We must be reassuring to Moscow. A *détente* encourages this delusion. The result would be a continued lowering of all our defenses in order to avoid frightening Moscow all over again.

The more sophisticated extension of this approach includes the notion that Moscow is only interested in filling the reactionary nooks and crannies of the non-Communist world by sporting ideological contests. If the Communists win, it proves only that they are the better team. This attitude abjures value judgments. It regards Communist tyranny as an acceptable alternative to democratic plodding. A *détente* would sanctify this amorality.

Throughout the world, the effect of a *détente* on the neutralist approach would be to vindicate it and to make a return to a posture of defense all the more difficult since the neutralists regard such a posture as inadvisable or positively evil in the first place.

But a *détente* would also have its effects on anti-Communists who still think international relations are governed by diplomats with attaché cases. What better time than a *détente* for a "general settlement" involving such narcotics as "non-aggression pacts" and Locarnos? There could be no harm in more non-aggression pacts (has anybody read the charter of the United Nations lately?) if we understood clearly that all such documents could be weapons of aggression in the hands of the Communists. Indeed it is not alone pacts, but merely the possibility of concluding them, that arouses a false sense of security.

The danger is deeper. Nobody has come up with a "general settlement" that is even remotely acceptable to Moscow which does not include some compromise that violates a moral principle. The Communists are not satisfied, and never have been, with quantitative concessions. They operate under the necessity of seeing their adversary, foreign or domestic, immolate himself. There is always some condition, apparently small and unimportant, that nevertheless involves the vacating of a principled position that is an integral part of the free world's moral case against Communism. In renewed reaching for a general settlement—the "final" tempting diplomatic taradiddle of a *détente*—we

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may find ourselves ready to give up our moral case.

We would surely give it up in abandoning the anti-Communists behind the Iron Curtain. A general settlement would write their epitaph. We might relieve our consciences by sending them unofficial messages of cheer. But they would be more impressed by the example of a free world in "agreement" with their oppressors. If we who live in comparative safety accommodate ourselves to the Communist tyranny, we can expect no less from those whose reluctance to do so might mean sudden death.

These are the conceivable consequences of a *détente*. They would cost the Communists nothing except attendance at a series of conferences each of which would end with hearty toasts and a firm decision to hold another conference.

They need not be regarded as inevitable. But certainly they are at least as strong a possibility as all-out war with the Communists, to which possibility we assign the highest priority for our wealth, manpower, and thinking.

The "new new look," even if it proves to be an improvement over the old "new look," would remain at best a military deterrent. It could be of no value in helping us through the quicksands of a *détente*. It would still leave us ill prepared for the prolonged struggle in non-military fields which we now face.

What can we do in the fields of politics, propaganda, economics, and diplomacy that will not only check the enervating effects of a *détente* but also turn the tide toward human decency?

We could spend more on economic aid and spend it more sensibly. We could propound, more dramatically, our desire for universal disarmament. We could support, more vigorously, independence for colonial peoples. We could operate in the international field more frequently through the United Nations. We could improve our propaganda—mainly by doing all the above things and by achieving more self-control in handling Communists at home.

I support such measures firmly. To the extent that we don't implement them, we are guilty of laxness in the common cause, an accusation we often make against our allies. But we are already so late with them that their practicability and effectiveness in the crucial period ahead is questionable.

We can, and certainly should, help to raise living standards throughout the world. But the more intense this effort becomes, the more complicated become political and psychological problems which we have barely begun to understand, much less solve. Anti-Communism and devotion to democracy are not inevitable concomitants of economic improvement.

Our advocacy of disarmament must be steadfast, imaginative, and sincere. But disarmament will be the consequence, not the cause, of international concord. Advocacy of disarmament is therefore essentially a psychological weapon, and in this sort of thing the Communists can match us by slogans, panaceas, and petitions that are no less effective because they are meaningless.

Whether these measures, or any other combination of specific ministrations, will suffice to salvage the democratic alliance must remain unanswered. For we face a more cruel fact, which is that nobody seriously believes they will be put into effect. It is not that the American people are actively against such measures; but, at this writing, they certainly are not for them vigorously enough to force action by an administration bemused with bombs and budgets.

In the past, the apparent hopelessness of a cause has not kept its advocates from fighting for it, and shouldn't divert them now. But this is no time to remain content with blind faith in lost causes based on some doctrine of automatic progress. In the face of totalitarian Communism, democratic progress is not automatic, it is retrogression that now seems automatic.

It becomes essential therefore to ask ourselves why the obvious imperatives of the democratic cause are not being followed. The superficial answer is that we don't take ser-

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iously, and therefore have not properly prepared ourselves for, the non-military aspects of the struggle. But this answer demands a more searching why, and the more searching answer, I suggest, lies in the weakness of our moral judgment on Communism.

What does it take to make democracy invincible in the face of Communism? It requires a positive faith in democracy strong enough to sustain the primacy of the anti-Communist struggle in the affairs of men so long as the Communist conspiracy remains. Without it, the historic divisions among the nations of the free world reassert themselves and enfeeble the alliance. Without it, the natural yearning for comfort and normality becomes dominant before the threat is eliminated. Without it, men of good will can convince themselves that the many and grievous shortcomings of the non-Communist world make it ineligible to carry on the struggle.

It is the conceit of many who do not recognize the primacy of the anti-Communist struggle that those who do must be negativists who ignore the conflicts among non-Communist nations and the evils within them. But it is precisely because the opportunity of free men to solve their problems—to say nothing of their ability to survive—is sabotaged by Communism that anti-Communism requires highest consideration. It is true that in the end the simple example of democracy as the natural expression of man's best instincts is the only final answer to tyranny in any form. It is true that improvement of democracy is more difficult during a cold war. But it is also true that democracy of any kind is impossible without victory over rampant totalitarianism. It is therefore true that the anti-Communist struggle is also the struggle for democratic self-improvement.

What can impel men to accept the anti-Communist struggle as uppermost, and compel them to make the sacrifices necessary to carry it on? The threat of violent attack is the obvious and completely effective incentive. Then it becomes simply a matter of immediate self-preservation. But what compels them to so onerous a decision when the threat of destruction is less obvious, as for example during a *détente*?

It is possible to argue that the threat to democracy, though not immediate, is still there. And because the argument is valid, it will be believed, or at least it will not be easily disbelieved. But whether men will act on it is another question. An attenuated threat is one that man learns to live with; he has adjusted himself to many of them. Men don't swallow cyanide but they do eat, drink, smoke themselves to death. And they are likely to compromise themselves to death with Communist tyranny if only the process isn't too fast and too obvious.

IT SEEMS to me inescapable that a lasting determination to maintain the primacy of the anti-Communist struggle can come only from the making of a moral judgment, and from a commitment commensurate with that judgment. A moral judgment cannot be confined to a condemnation of Communist physical violence—this is less a judgment than a reflex action. Communism must be judged for its total effect on civilization.

We have of course told ourselves repeatedly, and are constantly being reminded by our spokesmen, that the basic issue is moral. It is a "point" that Dulles makes in all his addresses. But the content of our thinking and the speeches of our leaders are almost always confined to military matters. To cope with Communist totalitarianism as a non-military but still malignant threat, we have few plans and fewer intentions of carrying them out. Despite our moral words, we tend to regard the reduction of the Communist military threat as the end of the Communist threat.

But that is not enough. I am convinced that the imperfect state of grace man has achieved after millennia of effort will be dissipated unless the dynamic, primitive amorality in Soviet Communist totalitarianism is eliminated first.

No democratic society—no society at all—has ever before faced such a challenge. In all its main aspects, it is unique in history. It is unique because no tyranny has ever before

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had not only the will but also the means to conquer the world, and because these means are not only physical but also psychological. This prospect has imposed on the peoples threatened a unique duty: to organize an alliance that is nothing short of global, that must seek to reach and discipline the heart, mind, and muscle of every person. And the task is unique because it cannot be discharged in one convulsive battle, but demands a grueling, prolonged war of physical, emotional, and mental attrition.

It is a task, too, that is essentially the responsibility—if only because they alone have the means to carry it out—of the heirs of the Enlightenment, a minority of the world's people largely inhabiting the northern shores of the Atlantic who are trying to give meaning to this tradition through a way of life called democracy. For this view of life and for the view of human beings it implies, the rigors of the anti-Communist struggle may simply be too much. For at every point in the struggle there are hesitations—hesitations which arise legitimately from our better impulses, but which may prove to be our fatal weakness.

All our experience tells us that the worst interpretation of Communism has always been the correct one and that we must therefore set out deliberately to destroy Communism. But this is an aim from which we shrink. We hesitate to believe that there can be a force in the world of such enduring malignancy. We hesitate before this cataclysmic conclusion and its implications because we believe—and this is one of our glories—that there is good in all men, that none is beyond salvation, or at least beyond making a deal with around a conference table. We hesitate because we are concerned with improving human welfare and Communism so often speaks the language of the common good, because we are rational and the Communist dynamic is a phenomenon we cannot fully explain. We hesitate to think that such a force, if it exists, can really conquer the world. And when these hesitations are resolved, we hesitate again because the course that's left risks a war of self-destruction. These are the hesitations of moral men trying to make a moral decision. He who is without such hesitations may berate the hesitators.

Yet, while maintaining even the most uncompromising opposition to Communism, it is essential to retain the willingness and ability to recognize a fundamental change in its nature, when it comes. Here is one more almost impossible task. Assuming we can draft the specifications for such a change, how will we be able to tell it has taken place? Communists are not simply people we are "against." The terrifying fact is that they are people who can be seen and heard and talked to, but with whom it is impossible to establish communication. The mechanics of human intercourse is language. For some time now, especially with experience of Soviet conduct in the United Nations, where we "talk to" the Communists constantly, we have been convinced that language, as they use it, is meaningless. Even language fortified by action is deceptive, since Communist dictators can afford tactical retreats designed to strengthen their ultimate goal.

And if Communist words and actions are meaningless to us, then ours probably are to them. Men who will use these basic tools of civilization to destroy it are not likely to believe that it is possible for anybody to mean what he says or does. Perhaps we shall know Communism has changed when it is possible to establish simple human communication with the Communists. We must watch for the change as intently as we must avoid the tendency to assume it is there when it isn't.

Another risk in maintaining the prolonged struggle against Communism is that anti-Communism will become the property of the anti-democrats. While moral men seek ways to defeat Communism with patience and fortitude, amoral demagogues seek to exploit the inevitable frustrations of the slow, sober struggle. In the emotional atmosphere of these frustrations, the know-nothing anti-Communism of McCarthy can look like the only valid anti-Communism. There are

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many ways in which McCarthy has cheapened American democracy and weakened the democratic alliance. But McCarthyism's greatest hurt to the democratic cause may be its prevalence as a substitute for the kind of cool-headed, constructive, long-term program to advance democracy at home and abroad which, along with armed strength, is essential for triumph over Communism. Perhaps we must accept the fact that ambitious and unscrupulous men will exploit Communism demagogically in order to achieve power, and in the process siphon off democratic reserves needed in the critical struggle ahead. This factor in politics is one of democracy's built-in weaknesses. In the face of Communism, it can be a disastrous weakness.

A DETENTE with Communism, then, involves the risk of throwing the whole game away. To avoid doing so requires transcendent moral purpose.

Unfortunately, moral purpose is not something that can be achieved through a five-point program; it is not the sum total of planned specifics. It's there or it isn't, depending on the strength of men's faith in their way of life.

Sometimes a leader expresses it. For a moment it seemed that Nehru, as the heir of the Indian nationalist struggle fathered by a great moral leader, might provide the moral spark in the struggle of the free. But this great reservoir of moral strength was drained in fighting Western imperialism. There was nothing left for a struggle against Soviet imperialism.

For a while the British Labor government performed acts of such extraordinary statesmanship in England and in Asia that it exerted a kind of moral example, not so much because of its specific actions or because of Attlee's personal magnetism (possibly because of his lack of it), but because it all represented the maturation of British Labor's humane purposes. However, this too seems to have run its course.

A spontaneous sense of moral purpose arose out of the Korean conflict. Truman was its midwife, but essentially it was leaderless. It made possible the first war fought for clearly moral ends.

Our immediate difficulty is that the Eisenhower leadership has not impressed itself on the world as a moral one.

On the record, as it were, Eisenhower is a moral man. His state papers and speeches contain eloquent affirmations of the faith of free men. No one has the right to doubt that the President deeply believes these affirmations, even though they are filtered to the public through screens of speech-writers and television experts.

We are also told that Eisenhower's administration is the most prayerful Washington has seen within recent memory. Of course, prayer is not necessarily religion, and religion is not necessarily morality. But neither is an excess of public praying necessarily a revelation of a hypocritical heart. Mahatma Gandhi, who prayed in public daily to the gods of all religions, was undoubtedly a moral leader. But the prayers of the Reverend Dr. Daniel F. Malan have not made him one, nor did the prayers of the Reverend Father Charles Coughlin. Whether justified or not, Eisenhower is in danger of becoming the global image of the local community leader whose fierce devotion to Sunday churchgoing does not dim the suspicion of his neighbors that his weekday activities will not stand up in the sight of the Highest.

For the present administration, the task is especially difficult since moral leadership is an unexpected quality in generals and Republicans. Mr. Dulles, in his anxiety to avoid the appearance of soft-headedness, too frequently gives the impression that the struggle against Communism is a logistic problem in which morality is item 3 (b), following "manganese." At best one gets the feeling that the moral issue has been raised to strengthen morale, and that it could be de-activated if only the imminence of the Communist menace subsided.

At any rate, neither for Americans nor for America's allies has this administration's leadership expressed or evoked the great moral resources that must reside in democratic society if it is to survive.

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A JEWISH GUIDE TO PARIS

Mementos of an Old People in an Old City

ALLAN TEMKO

"HA-IR HAGEDOLAH—that great city!" wrote that great traveler, Benjamin of Tudela, nearly eight hundred years ago: "Paris, situated on the river Seine . . . contains many learned men, the equal of whom are to be found nowhere on earth today; they employ all their time in study of the Law; are hospitable to all travelers, and are on friendly terms with all their Jewish brethren." The Paris that Rabbi Benjamin knew in the 12th century, with its brilliant Jewish and Christian schoolmen, is largely gone; but the description holds in part. Paris to the voyaging intellectual is still a very great and exciting city; and to the tourist, still the most hospitable and charming capital in the world. And the Seine still flows westward as a witness of history, timeless and time-driven, catching the sunlight and the moon, and reflecting the great cathedral which had been just begun when Benjamin passed through the Kingdom of Tsarphat, as he called France.

But Paris to the modern Jewish visitor carries a special interest which goes centuries beyond the visit of Benjamin and the construction of Notre-Dame, beyond even the transformation of the captured Gallic village into a Roman city. For in the Louvre, as in perhaps no other museum of the world, may be studied vestiges of an Israel that was a civilized kingdom when Gaul was a neolithic anarchy. And from the Louvre, down the violent centuries through the ancient streets of Paris, the story of that kingdom and its Dispersion may be traced with scarcely a break to the Modiglianis, Soutines, and Chagalls in the Musée d'Art Moderne. Here too, beside the Seine, is part of the story of the Return to the Land: beneath the trees of the Tuileries, Theodor Herzl meditated on *The Jewish State*. And here also, in the city of so many cruel moments for the Jew, is the memory of the most dreadful and most recent of all the persecutions, and of the fifty thousand Parisian Jews who did not return, as numberless other French patriots did not return, from the camps of Germany. No city in Europe may be more meaningful to the Jew; few—Worms perhaps, and Prague—are more poignant.

The Louvre

THE Jewish drama, as it may be seen in Paris, begins not in Europe, however, but in the East. The department of Antiquités Orientales in the Louvre is a sprawling collection of treasure which occupies half the rear of the palace. No Alexander ever looted the Asian lands as systematically as the archaeologists of France. In room after room stands the gorgeous wreckage of a score of civilizations, which invariably contains some souvenir of another, related civilization, Israel, amidst their relics.

The splendors of Susa, we recall, are those which Esther knew in Shushan, the luxurious palace of Ahasuerus, "where were white, green, and blue hangings, fastened with cords of fine linen and purple to silver rings and pillars of marble," and where the vessels of gold were each different from the other. The golden vessels are here, and the golden bracelets which Esther could have worn.

There is the exquisite glass of Phoenicia, and delicate Persian enamels, and there are

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JUNE is the month in which the great tidal wave of American tourists, sweeping from west to east, begins to break on the shores of Europe. For most of these tourists "that great city," Paris, is, it goes without saying, the chief Mecca of their pilgrimage. Paris has a special interest for Jewish visitors—for Jews have had an association, both painful and glorious, with the City of Light since the time it was a little Gallic village called Lutetia. Here ALLAN TEMKO provides the modern Jewish visitor with a historical guide to the Jewish memories and monuments of the city of the Seine. Mr. Temko is a frequent contributor to COMMENTARY. His most recent writing was "The Burning of the Talmud in Paris" (May). He lectures at the Sorbonne, and is writing a book on the Cathedral of Notre-Dame.

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the colossal gods of Babylon, to whom Daniel would not submit. It requires a close reading of the Old Testament to detect Israel's association with these lost kingdoms; to recognize the Jew as the captive led off into slavery by the troops of Sargon the Great; to imagine his primitive rituals through Assyrian scenes of animal sacrifice; to relate his Lord Yahveh with other Semitic gods of light and thunder.

What remains specifically of ancient Israel, beside this display of the grandeur of its rivals, is little enough. Babylon was taken in a single night, then generously allowed to decay, and eventually was buried by sand. Jerusalem was not so fortunate. After ruthless fighting and long sieges, it was destroyed utterly. And not only Jerusalem, but every important town of Palestine was devastated: Jericho, Bethel, Hebron. The destruction was so complete that the Louvre's meager collection of Palestinian antiquities is one of the most precious in the world. It occupies one of the most modest rooms in the museum, the central chamber of the Crypte Sully, which is reached by a staircase from Pierre Lescot's famous Salle des Caryatides. Three thousand years separate the feeling of these two rooms; they stand as far apart as the self-indulgence of the French Renaissance from the tough desert ethic of Moses' angry tribesmen. The distance may be flown in an instant on Balaam's magical beast.

"Woe to thee, Moab! Thou art undone, O people of Chemosh!" cries out the Book of Numbers. Yet the Moabite warrior dominating the left-hand wall of the Palestinian Room has far from admitted defeat. He is a doughty opponent, this half-naked prince who gestures with his lance at the sunny earth, about the 12th century B.C.E. Could his Israelite enemy have appeared much different? This short, pleated battle dress has been described by specialists as Egyptian; and the elegant plumed helmet as Hittite; but styles, like bronze lances and swords, must have changed with the fortunes of every battle in the warring Near East of the 2nd millennium. And this fierce Moabite profile, with its long and graceful eye, might have belonged to a hero of any Semitic nation. Little separated these tribes, except their gods. The Moabite god was Chemosh, and he was the implacable enemy of Yahveh; and if anyone would have opposed the Israelite advance into Canaan, it was the lancer in this remarkable bas-relief, which was discovered directly on the Israelite line of march, east of the Dead Sea, on the edge of the valley of Arnon. That the Moabite warrior and his King Balak did not succeed in stopping the Israelites is some indication of the fighting worth of the army of Moses.

Israel could defeat, but could not destroy Moab. For Chemosh was so wily and durable that even the elderly Solomon propitiated him with a "high place" outside of Jerusalem. Fighting between the two nations continued on in the dry borderlands for centuries until, after the enormous passage of time which separates the Book of Numbers from the Second Book of Kings, the Israelites under Omri at last achieved a decisive victory. Omri and his son Ahab exacted a heavy tribute from the vanquished: "an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool." No proud nation could long endure this penalty, and as the prophets were fond of repeating, Moab was nothing if not proud. Upon the death of Ahab, the Second Book of Kings begins dramatically, "Moab rebelled." The leader of this insurrection was King Mesha, who soon found himself confronted by a strong punitive expedition. Ahab's son Joram was joined by King Jehosophat of Judah and by the King of Edom, and the three monarchs quickly sent Mesha into retreat. They burned his cities and ravaged his fields, using a scorched-earth policy advocated by Elisha, the soul of the campaign.

In desperation Mesha resorted to a device which provides one of the most terrible scenes in the Bible. Cornered in Kir-haraseth, he sacrificed his eldest son to Chemosh as a burnt offering on the wall of the city. The Biblical account then says merely: "And there was great indignation against Israel; and they departed from [Moab], and returned to their own land" (II Kings 3:27). The Jewish version of the war ends there.

The Israelites departed, to be sure, but evidently Mesha and his warriors were not far behind them. In a series of counter-attacks he totally liberated his people and recovered his lost cities. He ranged into the territory of Israel, took the city of Nebo, sacked its sanctuary, and in gratitude to the god who had routed the hostile God Yahveh, offered the town's seven thousand inhabitants to Chemosh. After this triumph, he erected a "high place" to Chemosh outside his capital of Dibon, shortly after 842 B.C.E.

The extraordinary piece of black basalt which

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faces the Moabite warrior in the Louvre is the victory stele of that "high place"; the Moabite Stone. No single monument is more valuable to the study of ancient Palestinian history than this memorial, which after twenty-eight centuries still speaks with the same bold, heavy language as the Old Testament. For the Moabite Stone carries the earliest inscription which has survived of any Hebrew dialect; and its engraved surface tells more than the half of a war episode which the Bible omits. In its scornful reference to Yahveh, it has the distinction of providing the earliest use of the divine name in this spelling outside the Scripture. But let scornful King Mesha speak for himself:

I am Mesha, son of Chemosh king of Moab, the Dibonite. My father reigned over Moab for thirty years, and I reigned after my father. And I made this high place for Chemosh . . . because he had saved me from all my assailants, and because he had let me see my pleasure on them that hated me.

Omri was king of Israel and he afflicted Moab for many days, for Chemosh was angry with his land. And his son [Ahab] succeeded him, and he also said, I will afflict Moab. In my days said he thus, and I saw my pleasure on him and his house. And Israel perished with an everlasting destruction.

Now Omri had taken the land of Mehdeba. And [Israel] dwelt therein during his days, and half the days of his son: forty years. And Chemosh restored it in my days.

. . . And Chemosh said unto me, 'Go seize Nebo against Israel.' And I went by night and warred against it from the break of dawn to noon. And I seized it, and slew all of it, seven thousand men and boys and women and concubines and maidens, for I had devoted them to Ashtor-Chemosh. And I took the vessels of Yahveh, and dragged them before Chemosh. . . .

TIME passed, with its share of further disasters for a weakening Israel. Samaria was besieged and taken. Isaiah, showing a healthy suspicion of the strong nations on every side, foretold the Babylonian captivity. But to Israel remained several great creative triumphs, including the tunnel pierced by Hezekiah to aid the city in case of siege, which brought the waters of Shiloah into Jerusalem, about 700 B.C.E. Children playing near the walls seventy-five years ago found a stone commemorating the completion of this tunnel; and the Louvre copy of the original now in Constantinople (hung next to the Maobite Stone) was taken while the plaque was still in place. The inscription, the oldest known of purely Jewish significance, is curious. There is no personal vainglory, as in Mesha's victory stele; King Hezekiah is not so much as mentioned. Rather, there is lucid attention to technical detail, which was quite natural in an age which saw the perfecting of iron implements. Only one short passage of the text is obliterated:

This is how the tunnel was pierced. When . . .
. . . . the picks, each against the other, and when there were no more than three cubits remaining to be broken through, the voices of the workmen were heard calling from either side because the tunnel had been (almost) driven through. On the day of the breakthrough, the workmen struck to meet each other, pick against pick. Then the waters flowed from the spring to the pool, twelve hundred cubits; and two hundred cubits was the height of the rock overhead.

This feat would have done credit to the nation which, on the other side of the world, beside the Tiber, had scarcely emerged from the mist of legend in 700 B.C.E., but which would one day construct huge waterways of its own in the East. The Roman moment was still remote. First would come Greek armies, and with them the Hellenization of Palestine; the foundation of the superb Jewish community in Alexandria; the translation of the Septuagint; the adoption by Jews of Greek language and custom; Jewish admiration for Greek thought; and Jewish enthusiasm for Greek art. The casts of the lavish Hellenistic carvings which decorate this room in the Louvre were taken from the pediments and friezes of the Tomb of the Kings and the Tomb of the Judges, the rock sepulchres a few hundred yards from the walls of Jerusalem, but they might have been taken from any city in Asia Minor after the passage of Alexander. There is little to distinguish them as native Jewish art except a few clusters of grapes, or a palm-leaf *lulab*, hidden among the imported garlands.

Even the handsome little ossuaries—the Louvre's specimens are exceptionally fine—also reflect a foreign persuasion. Primitively the Jews buried their dead, and piously left the bones in the earth. Now, although they

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never yielded to the Greek and Roman practice of cremation, the more fashionable Jews could not resist these striking stone coffers, which they carved with rich local verve. For however great the foreign influence, the pure symbols of religion kept their traditional form: the rosettes in multiples of six petals, seen here on the osssuaries, were time-honored funerary insignia which doubtless ornamented orthodox wooden coffins, too. And on the small door from an inner chamber of the Tomb of the Kings (standing in the passage to the right, leading to the Carthaginian Room) may be seen more rosettes and spirals, as well as the menorah, and what may be a representation of the Ark.

IN SPITE of foreign pressure, the religion of Yahveh—perhaps the multitude of priests had already formalized the divine name to Jehovah—remained inviolable, in the most literal sense. No Gentile was allowed to intrude beyond the outermost court of the Temple, even during the Roman occupation. The inner sancta were protected by barriers, on which inscriptions in both Western languages warned non-Jews against approaching nearer. A cast of one of these warnings from Herod's Temple hangs next to the plaque of Hezekiah's Tunnel, mementos of two enormous creations seven centuries apart. The inscription admonishes, in Greek: "No foreigner may penetrate beyond this barrier and the wall which protect the sanctuary. He who is apprehended within may blame only himself for the death which shall be his punishment." That this warning was in deadly earnest, Saint Paul discovered when he tried to enter the interior court (Acts 21:26 *et passim*). He was saved from the indignant Jews only by the intervention of Roman troops.

In these final days of the ancient Jewish state, as its political existence crumbled, its faith of a single Lord remained dynamic. Judaism gained thousands of converts, some of them royal. The monumental sarcophagus which stands at the entrance of the Palestinian Room held one of the great queens of the earth, Helena of Adiabene, whose dominions extended from Armenia to Parthia, and who brought not only her husband but the entire ruling house of her kingdom to Judaism. Helena herself became a familiar figure in Jerusalem, where she built a palace, took the Hebrew name Zaddah, and endowed the Temple with sumptuous gifts, like the marvelous lamp which hung from the "Golden Vine" of the porch. Her sons built the Tomb of the Kings; her grandsons died in the defense of Jerusalem.

With the destruction of the Temple (70 C. E.), the story of Israel becomes part of a larger tale of empire. But vivid fragments of the submerged culture were to appear for centuries. To the left of the Moabite Stone (again in the passage leading to the Carthaginian Room) is a lintel from a tomb at Haifa which dates a full thousand years from the independent Israel of the primitive desert wars. Its inscription, too, is in Greek: "Resting place of Namosas, son of Menachem, Count *clarissimus* and Legate." The title of Count—*comes*—indicates a date at least as late as Constantine, and the transfer of the Imperial Residence to Byzantium. But the Hebrew names of Namosas, this regional lord of the Eastern Empire, and of his father Menachem were to outlast Byzantium, as they had outlasted Egypt and Babylon.

The Juiverie

AFTER the destruction of the Temple, says the legend, the Emperor Vespasian ordered three ships loaded with Jews put to sea without captain or crew, and left to the mercy of the winds. The vessels did not founder. Instead, they were blown an immense distance across the Mediterranean. One shot through the Straits of Gibraltar, rounded Spain, and at last drove ashore at Bordeaux. Another entered the mouth of the Rhone, and deposited its passengers at Arles. The third, with even more momentum, sailed up the Rhone past Arles, and grounded at Lyons.

The story is charming, and should be believed, except that, if the earliest Jews did arrive in Gaul in these wind-tossed little sloops, there were already Jews on shore to greet them. Long before the fall of the Temple, the Roman emperors considered Gaul an excellent place of exile for the cantankerous sons of Herod. The climate was pleasant, the natives were talkative, the wine could not be better; and emperors like Claudius, who never could be truly angry with these bold Jewish princes, thought that they would feel at home there.

This was early in the first century, yet it is likely that other Jews had arrived in Gaul earlier still. The entire political and economic apparatus of Rome followed the army of Caesar; and if in the East the Jews were to

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remain largely agricultural throughout the Diaspora, in Rome they were almost without exception mercantile and professional. Behind the conquering legions came the corn merchants, the shipping magnates, the fur traders, the wine wholesalers, and—the truth should be faced—the slave dealers, many of whom were Jews from Italy.

And as the rich province developed, and cities were built, Lutetia among them on the site of the former village of the Parisii, the Jews settled in Gaul and flourished. Jewish lawyers argued in Lutetia with the same skill and resourcefulness that Cicero had thoroughly respected in Rome. Jewish physicians prescribed soothing potions whose formulae they had learned in the medical schools of Alexandria. Jewish bureaucrats busied themselves with the official correspondence of empire. Slowly the word "Gallia" crept into the Talmud and the Midrashim.

Little more may be guessed of the lives of these first French Jews. In the grand imperial period they were generally untroubled, and in time of calm, Jewish history is usually sparse. Under Rome the Jews enjoyed not only equality before the law, but absolute freedom of worship, like any number of Oriental sects which had migrated to the Western Empire; and a severe Roman regulation protected their synagogues from any profanation. The Gallic Jews freely celebrated their Sabbath and their festivals, and from the renowned Gallo-Roman pottery works along the Meuse they ordered vases which were specially engraved with the Chanukah Lamp and the Shewbread Table. Significantly, the first documentary evidence for the presence of Jews in Gaul, a passage from the Theodosian Code of the year 321, confirms long-standing privileges of the Jewish community in Cologne.

Midway between embattled northern outposts like Cologne and the warm, secure Mediterranean world, stood the white Vitruvian city of Lutetia. Paris was then a crossways rather than a terminus; north and south, east and west, on two great routes—the road and the river—the pulse of empire flowed through the town, and brought it wealth. Both routes still cut Paris in virtually their original beds. In a single broad, straight, powerful line the Roman road bisects the city as the Rue Saint-Jacques on the Left Bank, and the Rue Saint-Martin on the Rive Droite. The present names are part of the still vivid medieval poetry of Paris, but in Roman days the highway was straightforwardly called the Via Magna. Walking down this ancient thoroughfare, it is difficult to imagine the radiant city which once covered the hill of the Left Bank. Once, in what is now the Latin Quarter, stood a Roman theater and arena, splendid residences, an aqueduct, the temples of a number of gods, and an imperial palace of which nothing remains but the ruins of the Thermae which are part of the Cluny Museum. From the Thermae, the oldest standing monument in the capital, begins any tour of Paris.

By the middle of the 4th century the brawny old palace had already ceased to be a pleasure house; it had become a fort. It served as military headquarters for one of the most intriguing figures of the declining Roman world: Julian the "Apostate Emperor." From his Spartan chamber in the Thermae, where on the coldest days of winter he would not permit a fire, his troops carried Julian forth on their shields to the adventure which took him backward in space and time, down the valley of the Danube, across Europe to Asia, trying to reverse history. Julian's failure to reconstruct the Temple of Jerusalem was only part of his larger failure to vanquish Christianity; but the bizarre scheme to rebuild the destroyed sanctuary was easily the most spectacular element of his plan. The collapse of the project was more spectacular still. As ground was broken for the new sanctuary, the subterranean passages of the old Temple were uncovered; and when workmen entered with torches, the gases which had accumulated in the sealed basements ignited with a roar. Terrible fires and new explosions followed, deep in the earth, extending far beneath Jerusalem and rocking the whole of the city, roaring and blasting through the underground chambers where priceless Jewish treasure had been concealed, and where Jewish heroes had hidden from their Roman conquerors.

After Julian's death, the two inexorable forces which he had momentarily checked, Christianity and pagan barbarism, swept over the Western Empire. The two clashed, and then, in the strangest of paradoxes, combined. Before they themselves knew it, the Frankish kings were not only Christians, but soldiers of Jesus. Under the Church's banner they triumphed over pagans in Lorraine and heretics in the Pyrenees, until all France was theirs, and they fought on against each other.

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When they noticed him, these despots also struck crudely at the Jew. The confiscation of synagogues and introduction of pariah laws date from this period when men who could not think rationally expressed their emotions in sporadic shows of force. In 554, from this same palace of the Thermae in which Julian had read his Plato, King Childebert I issued the order forbidding Jews to appear on the streets for four successive days, as Christ's Passion was celebrated, from Maundy Thursday to Easter Monday. His nephew Chilperic I went further: in 582 he decreed a mass baptism for the Jews of Paris. The gold merchant Priscus stubbornly resisted this edict, only to be murdered by the converted Jew Phatir and his henchmen. In 614 a Church council held at Paris prohibited Jews from exercising any military or administrative office, as they had so capably under the Romans, unless baptized. And in 629, Chilperic's grandson Dagobert, terrified by an astrologist's prediction to the Emperor Heraclius at Constantinople that his empire would be destroyed by a circumcised people, drove from France every Jew who would not embrace Christianity. Nine hundred years after this expulsion, but perhaps referring to a Merovingian source since lost, Joseph ha-Kahen wrote: "Many changed their faith at that time, while large numbers perished by the sword." This persecution lasted at least ten years to the death of Dagobert in 638.

THE Jews who suffered these barbarities saw the classical world literally demolished before their eyes. The Merovingian, who could not build, knew how to destroy. He fragmented the spacious Roman street pattern until it was smashed as Humpty Dumpty, and not even Baron Haussmann could put it together again. In the twisting streets and lanes between the Thermae and the Seine, where a broad forum once stood, and on the fortified island, medieval Paris was taking form; and the Jew, with the rest of the population, was compressed in its timid periphery. Today the area seems amazingly small. The faubourg huddled beside the Petit Pont covered one or two acres, and the Ile-de-la-Cité, much smaller than today, covered eight acres at the most.

Some Jews remained on the Left Bank for most of the Middle Age. They set up shop as *negotiatores* on either side of the Roman road, where they traded in spices, silk, gems, and a variety of exotic Eastern goods. Nearby, behind the Rue Galande, was their burial ground which was one of the first Jewish cemeteries in northern Europe; and not far away, conceivably on the Rue Saint-Severin, or perhaps in a crazy little alley like that of the Chat Qui Pêche, must have been the Jewish home which served as a clandestine synagogue for Priscus and his brethren when King Chilperic denied them the Sabbath. And the lovely 12th-century church of Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre stands on the same emplacement as an earlier Saint-Julien where the murderers of Priscus sought sanctuary.

But the majority of the Merovingian Jews, like the bulk of the Christian population, until the tremendous expansion of Paris at the end of the Dark Age, resided in the walled Cité. The island had been fortified after the first brutal raids by the Franks and the Alemanni in the year 280; and the Jews settled in its very heart, astride the Roman road and in the street adjoining, where they were close to the market on the Cathedral plaza. Here they stayed for centuries, so that the short central section of the Roman road, between the island's two bridges, became known as the Juiverie.* Today the street has lost all of its ancient character, and runs as a nondescript path of asphalt between the Hospital of the Hôtel-Dieu and the Prefecture; but once it was the single most important thoroughfare of medieval France, and at its very center stood the renowned Paris Synagogue and its scholars who so hospitably received Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela.

In this Jewry—and it was not a ghetto—the tiny Paris community watched the Dark Age pass. They saw the Merovingians eventually destroy themselves and a new dynasty arise: the sons of Charles Martel. And for the briefest of moments, they enjoyed the Carlovingian calm. The age of Charlemagne, which has been praised for its revival of learning, also produced a rebirth of tolerance. Jews were elevated to positions of importance and respect; and when the Emperor dispatched his famous embassy to Harun-al-Rashid, its interpreter was a linguist named Isaac who presumably was perfectly at ease in the polyglot Bagdad of the Caliphs. Of Isaac not much is known except that he returned in 802 with gifts so fabulous

*The etymology of the term is interesting: *Vicus Judeorum* in medieval Latin; then *Vicus Judeari* or simply *Judearia;* finally, in the popular tongue, *la Juyerie, la Juyrie, la Jurie.*

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that they stunned the unsophisticated West. Among them was the celebrated elephant Abulabaz (Abu-Lubabah, "the father of intelligence"), who braved the European climate for eight years and then succumbed. All that remains of Abulabaz is his memory, but in the Cabinet des Médailles of the Bibliothèque Nationale is the even more fabulous Sassanid Cup of Khosru, another of Harun's gifts, whose green and scarlet disks, with their gold and ruby mountings, seem incredible as ever.

After this brief glimpse of light, France hurtled into a darkness that was total. Down from Scandinavia swept the Norse pirates, clad in wild armor, worshipping the misty gods of the fjords, sailing hundreds of miles in boats shaped like ferocious birds. These savages, like a thousand Beowulfs, invaded the valley of the Seine, bellowing war songs, looting, burning, slaughtering. In 856 they stormed Paris, and except for the Cathedral, which was ransomed, devastated every church in the Cité. Did the Synagogue perish, too? No one can say, but even then the Normans had a reputation for thoroughness. Very likely the Jews suffered in the same way as their Christian neighbors.

Slowly, from the end of the 10th century, times improved. The Normans were driven back to their rugged peninsula; and the Counts of Paris, sons of a tough noble named Hugh Capet, began to call themselves hereditary Kings of France. By the beginning of the 12th century they were monarchs in fact as well as name, and their capital, breasting outward on either bank, became the city which created Notre-Dame.

Notre-Dame

NOTRE-DAME, more than any collection of written documents, is the *summa* of medieval Paris: the total, ideal image of the society which challenged Heaven with its ambitious faith, and which, from the casting of the Cathedral's foundations in 1163 to the completion of the forward towers in 1250, made Heaven yield to its high vaults and pinnacles. And the Parisian Jew, who at the moment the Cathedral rose suffered the most severe persecutions he had yet known in the city, who in 1182 saw his venerable Synagogue seized and converted to a church, who lost his home and most of his property, and was himself exiled from France for sixteen years, until 1198; the Jew who, as the Cathedral stood almost completed in 1242, saw the Talmud publicly burned in the great monument's shadow—this same Jew also saw, by the cruelest of ironies, his own image depicted ideally in the sculpted portals of the church as a personification of his Old Testament ancestor. More than this, he saw his own perilous daily existence transformed and portrayed gorgeously as Biblical life; and as the final irony, saw his religion gowned as a queen, only that her crown could be dramatically struck from her head, and her royal mantle stripped from her shoulders, to emphasize her defeat by the rival queen, the Church Triumphant.

In tall niches to either side of the central portal of Notre-Dame, in perhaps the most striking situation for sculpture in the entire façade, the two queens flank a majestic Last Judgment.* Their position is not at all accidental, for they are as essential to this vision of Domesday as the scales of the Archangel Michael.

To the left of the visitor (but on the right hand of Jesus), erect and commanding, the Church proudly wears the crown she has taken from her enemy. The medieval Christian theologian, justifying the symbol in his endless dialectic, found its basis, surprisingly enough, in not the New but the Old Testament. He repeated the terrible words of Ezekiel: "Israel, whose day is come . . . thus saith the Lord God: Remove the diadem, and take off the crown."

And across the portal, beside frightening scenes of the Damned in Hell, on the vindictive left hand of Jesus, the Synagogue stands blinded by a coiling serpent. From her hand slips the overturned Tablet of the Law. Her staff is shattered and falling, and she herself seems faint and about to glide to the earth. This is more than a symbol of defeat; it is an argument for conversion. "For, behold," quoted the Christian theologian—as Isaiah beheld in his dreadful vision: "the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, doth take away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stay and the staff." But—and the Church emphasized this point—the Evangel held out hope in the words of Paul: " . . . for if that which was done away is glori-

*The present queens are modern, but restored according to the original iconography. In the Musée des Monuments Français at the Trocadéro, however, is an excellent plaster reproduction of the beautiful "Synagogue" of the Cathedral of Strasbourg (Salle XI).

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ious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: and not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished; but their minds were blinded, for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away."

WHAT the Jew, unable to defend himself if he outraged Christian sensibility, thought of this argument may be surmised only through his continued suffering and humiliation as the price of fidelity to his religion. It is curious, however, that after the solid Biblical foundation claimed by Christians for the iconography of the Church Triumphant and the Synagogue Defeated, all of the remaining sculpture at Notre-Dame which holds a particular Jewish interest is grounded only on Apocrypha. The book of the pseudo-Saint Matthew, for example, provided the legend of the birth and marriage of the Virgin which, as illustrated in the great right-hand portal of the façade, reveals strikingly the bizarre, half-conciliatory medieval notion of a joint heritage. On the lower lintel, beneath a magnificent enthroned figure of the Virgin in majesty, the story is staged as a play, not in Old Testament costume, but in modern dress of the year 1200; and since the action takes place before the birth of Jesus, when the Holy Family of course were orthodox Jews, the *dramatis personae* are appropriately dressed as Jews—French Jews at the turn of the 13th century.

"In Israel there was a man named Joachim," reads the Apocrypha, "of the tribe of Judah, and he tended his lambs, fearing God in the simplicity and righteousness of his heart." For twenty years Joachim had been married to Anne, and they were childless. For this reason, they are seen on the right-hand side of the lintel, entering the Temple with offerings for the Lord. The Temple, in the concise sculptural language of the Gothic, is signified by a tiny double arcade, whose gracious little arches, elegant colonnettes, and fastidious sculpted capitals make it seem the most sumptuous doll's house ever constructed. Actually, it is neither a doll's house nor the Temple of Jerusalem, but a French synagogue of the year 1200; and the lordly, bearded high priest who receives the sober Jewish couple is none other than one of the great Parisian rabbis whose scholarship Benjamin of Tudela so admired. Notice the simple stone altar, with its severe incisive carving, and the Scroll gracefully unrolled upon it. Above the altar is the Eternal Lamp, whose mysterious flickering light illumines the temple's ribbed ogival vaulting. With one hand the high priest rejects the couple's offerings; with the other he points to a text of the Law: anathema to barren marriages.

The story continues to the right (on the lintel and at the base of the voussoirs). Joachim, overwhelmed by sorrow, departs for the wilderness with a young friend. The old man's few necessities are tied in a kerchief and hung from his staff, like those of any medieval Jewish wayfarer. Notice the two men's clothing. Joachim, getting along in years and subject to chill, wears a long cloak which is hiked about his waist; his hat—which resembles a circular, overturned cake mold—is a special Jewish fashion, as is his companion's, a more jaunty conical headpiece. (These odd hats, it should be remarked, were worn voluntarily; it was still too early for prescribed costumes for Jews.) Joachim is next seen tending his sheep in a remote desert pasture. After five months of isolation, an angel flies out of a cloud, and informs him that God has heard his prayers and will grant him a child. He hurries back alone to Jerusalem, and in the last voussoir meets Anne, who has been visited by the same angel and has come to welcome him back. They embrace reverently beneath the Golden Gate.

Fourteen years pass before Act II—the tale of Joseph's Blossoming Rod—takes place on the left-hand side of the lintel. The Virgin has been born, and reared in the Temple. She is already a beautiful young woman, and has arrived at the medieval age for marriage. The choice of a husband, however, is so crucial that the high priest has decided to leave the selection to the Lord. The suitor whose hazel branch blossoms will be the lucky man; and the branches of no less than fifteen competitors are stacked overnight on the altar of the Temple (depicted again near the center of the lintel). The suitors look on hopefully from the voussoirs at the left. But attractive as they are—and there are few figures in the whole Cathedral as handsome as these 13th-century Jews—none of

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the suitors will be successful. For Saint Joseph has arrived, riding slowly on horseback: an elderly and altogether unsatisfactory-looking bridegroom. He too wears a Jewish hat and a long cloak, which is fastened at his right shoulder by a magnificent brooch. It is Joseph's rod, of course, which blossoms. Saint Anne embraces him, or rather touches him lightly on the brow in a most subtle gesture, while two disappointed suitors stare at him with something less than joy. And finally, hands joined, Joseph, the high priest, Mary, Joachim, and Anne celebrate the marriage. This extraordinary scene, at once earnestly serious and utterly charming, is a Jewish marriage of the early 13th century.

THE stateliness of the bearded medieval rabbi may be seen to even better advantage in the third great portal of the façade, on the north, where the scale of the composition is larger and the bas-reliefs approach life-size. On the lowermost register of the tympanum, to either side of a Gothic Ark of the Covenant, sit three kings and three prophets. All six belong to the Old Testament, and although they have not been positively identified, two of the patriarchs would seem to be Moses and Aaron. The portraits are incredibly beautiful—the sculptor has endeavored to make each more handsome than the next. But fully as fascinating as the portraits, which might be compared with the Beau-Christ of Amiens or, for that matter, with the splendid Jesus enthroned directly above, is the stone bench on which the patriarchs and kings are seated. It provides an invaluable clue to the interior architecture of the lost French synagogues of the Middle Age.

But if the Middle Age could portray the Jew as patriarch and saint, it could also show him as Satan. In the portal of the northern transept, above still another ravishing statue of the Virgin, is the story of the monk Theophilus and his temptation by Salatin, the Jew, who is a direct agent of the Devil. Salatin ensnares the ingenuous Theophilus in a contract for his soul; but the monk sees his error in time, and prays to the Virgin for aid. Mary, in the Middle Age, never refused such an appeal; and here she routs the Devil and makes Theophilus a bishop. Gowned in his pontifical robes, at the top of the tympanum, he shows the canceled agreement to his marveling congregation. The story appears exactly as it does in the famous miracle play of Rutebeuf, which was staged in front of this and a thousand other church portals. Its implications, to an illiterate public which knew almost nothing of Judaism, may be guessed. The miracle play did as much as anything to inflame the pogrom mood of the later Middle Age.

Inside the Cathedral, the Jewish visitor should take a special glance at the great northern rose window. North, the dark country, the region of night, of primordial emptiness and dread, had particular significance for the Middle Age. The northern God lived near the pagan wastes, and was the unforgiving Lord of the Ten Commandments. The north wind blew from the chilled Biblical land of the patriarchs and prophets: gaunt, bearded Abraham, and strident Elijah. And this breathtaking blue rose, like a stark dawn in Genesis, opposes with all its cold strength the sun-filled rose of the southern transept which confronts it, and which symbolizes—to add drama to drama—the warm love of the Evangel.

This vast sheet of northern blue contains eighty subjects from the Old Testament, almost all in original glass of about the year 1250. In the innermost circle of medallions are sixteen prophets who, the medieval Christian was sure, foretold the coming of the Savior in their declamations. With a pair of opera glasses, Ezekiel, Zephaniah, and Micah may be recognized easily from their vivid Latin names. In the second circle are thirty-two kings, considered ancestors of Jesus, and among them are Saul and Joram—the Joram who was seen twenty-one hundred years earlier riding out to do battle with King Mesha of Moab. In the outermost circle are thirty-two patriarchs and high priests *(summi sacerdotes)*; Aaron's and Joachim's are among the few names which may be read.

The Ville

THE Paris which leaped into the high air with the towers of Notre-Dame also spread prosperously over solid earth. As population increased, and times continued to improve, the capital expanded to the Right Bank, which had been largely uninhabited until the 12th century. Just as the Left Bank was called the Université, and the island was the Cité, the new faubourg became known as the Ville, and it quickly acquired a commercial character which it has never lost. The Parisian Jews, who were ordinary businessmen and artisans as well as moneylenders, began very early to

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live here rather than in the ancient Juiverie on the island. The movement dates at least from the foundation of the great Right Bank markets by Louis VI in 1137, where the Halles stand today. And from the Halles eastward to the Place des Vosges, in the dark crowded streets behind the Rue de Rivoli, many of the Jews of Paris may be found today—still living as small merchants and craftsmen.

The study of street names may be rewarding. The busiest kosher delicatessens in Paris are found at the intersection of the Rue des Rosiers and the Rue Ferdinand Duval. ("I know," one proprietor admits sadly to New Yorkers, "it's not like 45th Street.") In the Middle Age the Rue Ferdinand Duval was called Rue des Juifs; and the Rue des Rosiers terminated in a *cul-de-sac* at the fortifications of the city, which may be an indication that the Jews were compelled to live near the walls, as in some French towns. But no edict obliging the Parisian Jews to reside in a particular quarter has ever been found; and it is likely that they lived on these streets then, as now, by choice.

There were other Right Bank Juiveries in addition to the Rue Ferdinand Duval. Jews lived on almost half of the narrow lanes which are at present being demolished to either side of the Rue Saint-Martin (again, the Roman road). It is a mistake to assume from the modern condition of this neighborhood—always the least salubrious in Paris—that the medieval Jews were crowded in a slum as in a Hole of Calcutta. Six hundred years ago the air in these streets was considerably cleaner than today; the houses, a few of which actually go back to the late Middle Age, were in better condition; and rather than filth-littered cement, their courtyards were gardens. Moreover, Christians lived side by side with Jews under virtually identical conditions. In the Rue des Lombards, for instance, moneylending was conducted by Jews as well as their Christian competitors. Other ancient Jewish streets in the quarter (several with new names) are the Rues Quincampoix, des Jardins, des Archives, de Moussy, Neuve Saint-Méry, de Renard, and de la Tacherie.

After their return from exile in 1198, the Jews concentrated here, and established three small synagogues to replace the one they had lost in the Cité. One, on the Rue de Moussy, received from medieval wiseacres the expressive sobriquet of *"pet-au-diable."* The Jews must have smiled wryly when they were thus taunted, for the public insult, to which they dared not reply in kind, had become a daily occurrence. From the 13th century onward, Jewish life in France was dominated by growing social terror and financial insecurity. After the Lombards were invited to Paris in 1224, they replaced the Jews as large-scale moneylenders; and the Jews, who found almost every other *métier* closed to them, were reduced to pawnbroking. When the Lombards, later joined by the Cahorsins, at last assumed total control of the field, they proved such harsh creditors that many citizens regretted the change. One limerick ran:

Car Juifs furent deboneres
Trop plus, en fesant telz afferes
Que ne sont ore Crestiens . . . . *

In addition to the arrival of the Lombards, the year 1224 was marked by an event of much more consequence to the Jews: the beginning of the reign of a Christian mystic, Saint Louis. The King's piety had one outlet in a series of anti-Semitic measures which culminated, in 1269, in the imposition of the *rouelle,* the "little wheel" of saffron silk or felt which the Jew was forced to wear as a sign of infamy.

ATROCITIES against the Jew, which had been intermittent since the First Crusade, now became usual. The story of "le Bon Juye" Jonathas, as told in distorted form by the chroniclers, is a case in point.† Today the 18th-century church at 24 Rue des Archives looks innocent enough; but in 1290 the home of Jonathas stood on the spot, and was the scene of a singular episode which has become notorious in the history of Paris. A Christian woman had left her best clothing in pawn with Jonathas in exchange for thirty sous, or half a silver mark—a sum which suggests that her finery was elegant indeed, or the pawnbroker generous. The loan proved difficult to repay, and when Easter arrived, the woman begged the Jew to return her clothing temporarily, so that she might wear it to church. The Jew

*"For Jews were much more debonair, in conducting such affairs, than Christians today. . . ."

†The best medieval account, because it is the oldest, is in the chronicle of Saint-Denis, which ends in the year 1328, and may have been compiled by a monk who was alive at the time of the incident.

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agreed, and quite astonishingly (although the Church chroniclers chose to minimize this) asked for no other collateral or additional interest. Instead, he requested only that the woman bring him a communion wafer. She agreed; and when she next presented herself for Holy Communion, preserved the Host intact, and gave it to the Jew. He took it, remarking: "I shall soon know if this is truly the body of Christ, as Christians claim."

Thereupon he placed the wafer on a money chest, and pierced it several times with a knife. Blood poured forth abundantly, "as from a human body."

The Jew called his wife Bellatine and their children, who stood by astonished as he hammered a nail into the Host, which spouted blood more freely than ever. Bellatine grew terrified, and begged Jonathas to stop, but he grew enraged, and threw the Host in the fire.

The wafer leaped from the flames undamaged, and flew about the room. As it sailed past, the Jew tried to precipitate it into *"le lieu le plus infecte de la maison,"* but it would not enter. He beat the wafer with a rod, but it would not break. In desperation, he cast it in a pot of boiling water. The water reddened, but the Host remained intact, and Bellatine saw that it carried the image of Jesus crucified. Overwhelmed with terror and remorse, she returned to another room, so that she would see no more.

At this moment the Mass was rung at the nearby priory of Sainte-Croix-de-la-Brétonnerie, and the parishioners hurried past the Jew's house on the way to services. Jonathas' little son stood in the doorway and asked where they were going.

"We are going to church to adore God."

"It's no use," observed the child, "for my father has given Him so many blows that he has killed Him."

The passersby laughed, but one woman took the boy seriously. She entered the house on the pretext of asking for fire, saw the Host, hid it in an urn she was carrying, and carried it directly to the curate of Saint-Jean-en-Grève, to whom she related all that had passed. Bishop Simon Matiffas de Buci was in turn informed, and ordered the Jew and his family arrested. Jonathas was interrogated and—some chroniclers say—"did not deny the crime"; others claim "he confessed all without repentance." The Bishop exhorted him in vain to renounce his error, and at last delivered him to the secular authorities, who ordered him to be burned alive.

As Jonathas approached the pyre, he cried: "Ah, if only I had a book which is in my house! Then the fire could not burn me." The authorities complied with the request. The book was found and hung from his neck, and then, before a marveling multitude, Jonathas went up in flame, book and all. His wife and children were converted and baptized, and sent to live in a convent. His house was seized and transformed into a chapel. Later it expanded into a monastery, which was known as the place "where God was boiled." The indestructible Host was preserved until the French Revolution as a precious relic, and carried in annual processions. Today it has vanished, like all other evidence of the affair. But behind the high altar of Notre-Dame may be seen the marble sepulchre of Bishop Simon Matiffas, who lies sculpted upon it, quite serene and confident in death.

YEAR after year more Jews perished violently, and were buried in a small cemetery which remained to them on the Left Bank, near the crossing of Boulevards Saint-Germain and Saint-Michel, on the site of the Librairie Hachette. More than forty tombstones have been recovered from this burial ground, and carried across the Boul' Mich to the Cluny Museum.* The chaste, beautifully carved Hebrew inscriptions reveal with immense dignity the courage and refinement of the lost community. The oldest reads: "This is the stone of Solomon, son of the learned Rabbi Judah, who departed for the Garden of Eden (1230 C.E.); may his soul be bound in the bundle of Life."

*It is hoped that renovation of the Grande Salle des Thermes will be completed, and the stones again placed on exhibition, by summer. Since the conversion of Cluny to an exclusively medieval museum, however, its magnificent collection of Jewish Renaissance *objets d'art* has been placed in permanent reserve. Until the collection finds a new home, it will be impossible to see such treasures as the great Modena Ark, a masterpiece in dark walnut whose chronogram inscription carries its date, 1472. The collection also includes exquisite carved scrolls, silk and velvet mantles, silver pointers and breastplates of Italian, Dutch, and German workmanship. And there are remarkable pieces of art that decorated Jewish homes of the Renaissance: spice boxes and *kiddush* cups, Purim dishes, Chanukah candelabra, engraved circumcision knives, and filigreed wedding rings. No collection in the world offers a lovelier glimpse of Jewish life in Europe from the 15th to 18th centuries.

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The 13th century had brought severe persecution; the 14th was a period of alternate exile and slaughter. In 1306 the survivors of the once considerable community—they were now less than a thousand—were exiled by Philip the Fair. They were recalled in 1315, possibly because of popular indignation against the Lombards, only to suffer a massacre in 1321 and a new expulsion in 1322. In 1359 they were recalled again, massacred anew in 1380 and 1382; and, perhaps mercifully, permanently exiled by Charles VI in 1394. The exiles traveled eastward to Germany and Bohemia, south to Italy, and north to Holland, where they mingled with native communities and lost their French character completely.

For three full centuries afterward no Jew appeared openly in Paris. An occasional Marrano might escape detection, but professing Jews were rigorously denied residence. In all France only the Papal province of the Comtat Venaissin remained open to them. That the Jews did not grow wealthy there may be guessed from a saying which was current: "As poor as a Jew from Avignon." But elsewhere Jews flourished, and for this long period of exile, it is necessary to search for venerable French names in Amsterdam and Rome. Holland in particular provided a haven; and two of Rembrandt's best-known paintings, "The Philosopher" and the "Jew with Fur Cap," hang in the Louvre to show the type of man who sat for the master but could not enter France.

In the Bibliothèque Nationale, too, there are several treasures which have survived the Jewish communities of Renaissance Rome. In the manuscript collection are two extraordinary illuminated Italian Haggadahs (Fonds Hébreux, Nos. 1333 and 1388); and in the Cabinet des Médailles is the famous bronze called "The Medal of Fourvières," which was found in France, near Lyons, but whose cryptic Hebrew characters reveal that it was cast in Rome shortly after 1503, to celebrate surreptitiously the death of Pope Alexander VI—as cruel a Borgia as any.

Also in the Cabinet des Médailles, and very much worth an examination, are a valuable collection of Cabalistic charms and amulets, and a superlative group of antique Jewish coins (case 12) which date from Simon Maccabee (No. 1812) to the last revolt under Bar Kochba (Nos. 1837-1839). Herod the Great appears in a powerful profile, showing the strong family nose (No. 1784), and Herod Agrippa is represented by his royal parasol (No. 1823).

After 1789

WHEN the French Revolution at last swept the Divine Monarch from his throne, the Jew found himself free to return to Paris. But when the first immigrants entered the capital in 1789, *voilà*!—some five hundred Jews were already living in the city. Gradually, since the turn of the 18th century, as the *ancien régime* decayed, Jews had been returning surreptitiously to virtually the same neighborhoods they had inhabited centuries before. On both sides of the river there were secret inns where, through the negligence (or corruption) of the police, Jews could live with no questions asked. Yet although they lived in common uneasiness and even common danger, the Jews could no longer live on a common basis with one another. A change had taken place during the long exile.

Three distinct—and rival—groups composed the new Jewish community. The first in date of arrival, and in social status, but the smallest numerically, were the Sephardim from southeastern France. To some extent they enjoyed official favor, since they had been naturalized as "New Christians" at Bayonne in 1550. Externally, there was nothing to distinguish them from other Frenchmen. They spoke French perfectly, dressed as Frenchmen, sported French swords and powdered wigs; sometimes they adopted spurious French titles to disguise their superb Spanish and Portuguese names. Moreover, because of the thriving chocolate factories at Bayonne and Bordeaux, they were prosperous. And since they were a moving force in the monastery's annual fair, they were protected by the powerful Left Bank Abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés; and their clandestine synagogue was located a few blocks from the great abbey church, in the fine mansion at No. 3 Rue Suger. There were perhaps fifty Sephardim in Paris when the Revolution broke out.

Slightly less patrician than the Sephardim, but perhaps more thoroughly French than they, were some one hundred Jews from the Comtat Venaissin, members of the communities which had constructed the lovely Provençal synagogues at Carpentras and Cavaillon. They settled in the same streets on the Left Bank as the Sephardim, with .whom they quarreled over business and other matters.

The Sephardim and the Avignonnais were

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soon to forget their differences, however, and merge in a common hostility to the hundreds and hundreds of Ashkenazim who now flowed into France. From Alsace and Lorraine, and from across the Rhine, returned Jews who may have had equal claim to be considered lineal descendants of the lost communities of medieval France. Yet they returned not speaking French but German, and not always correct German at that. This was the first time that Yiddish was spoken in Paris; and it horrified the Sephardim and Avignonnais to be associated with these strange-speaking, still more strangely dressed, and not too well-washed co-religionists who settled in the plebeian streets of the ancient Right Bank Jewries.

It was unthinkable, for example, that they should be buried in the same ground. And so, on their last journey, the Sephardim traveled across the Seine to a hidden cemetery at La Villette, now a part of Paris, but then just outside the city limits.* This silent burial ground is remarkable for its *cachet* of 18th-century secrecy. At that time the house which shields it from the street was an inn, and the host, a Monsieur Matard, doubtless sheltered many a new Jewish arrival. Matard charged these illegal guests a good price for his rooms; he charged even more for a permanent stay in the garden: fifty *livres* for an adult, twenty or thirty for a child. A greedy fellow, Matard. He was discovered skinning horses and cattle in the garden too, and disposing of the unsellable parts in the same earth as the dead. The indignation and sorrow of the Jews compelled them to deal directly with the authorities; and after delicate negotiations, in 1780, the Sephardim secured—for themselves—permission to bury Jewish dead in Paris for the first time in four hundred years.

The epitaphs on these elegant Louis XVI graves are, as might be expected, written in purest French. And one of them tells unforgettably what the Revolution meant to a Jew: "The Lord All High has summoned me in my twenty-third year. I prefer my present fate to slavery. O immortal soul, seek to live free; or follow me, like a good Republican! Here rests Samuel Fernandes Patto, of Bayonne, deceased the 28th Prairial of Year II of the French Republic, One and Indivisible!"

Far across Paris, this time beyond the southern limit of the city, at Montrouge, the Ashkenazim buried their dead in an altogether different spirit.† The epitaphs are in Hebrew, and dated according to the Jewish calendar. They might have been carved in Vilna rather than Paris: "Here rests a virtuous woman, Dina Schenke, wife of Leib Niederweiller. She died on the Sabbath and was buried—her reputation perfect—on Sunday evening . . . 5565."

WITHIN a generation these Alsatian and German Jews were to become thoroughly French. As their numbers rose to forty thousand by the middle of the 19th century, they eclipsed the tiny Sephardic community which, numerically, had remained stagnant. Then, by 1880, they were looking down, with considerable *amour propre*, on new waves of unkempt immigrants who poured into Paris as refugees from pogroms in the Russian empire. (Excellent scale models of the fortress-synagogues from which some of these Jews fled are on exhibition at the newly established Musée d'Art Juif, 12 rue des Saules; Métro: Lamarck; open Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 3-6 P.M.)

With political freedom, Paris again developed as one of the great Jewish cities of the world. Its exciting community grew to two hundred thousand, and has ranged from the Rothschilds to Heinrich Heine: Heine, the first modern Jewish artist to set up residence in Paris, the first of the modern intellectual political refugees. A happy Paris for the Jew: the Brothers Pereire building their railway, and being honored by the dedication of a great avenue on the Right Bank. But, too, the Paris of Captain Dreyfus locked in his cage of prejudice. And later, the Paris of the terrible moment in 1940; the four years of death and torture, of the prison trains rolling to Auschwitz, the resumption of the yellow badge; and the Paris of still another triumphant Return, and a future of possible beauty.

*At 44 Rue de Flandre (Métro: Riquet). Authorization to visit, however, should be first secured from the Paris Consistoire, 44 Rue de la Victoire.

†The cemetery is awaiting restoration, and not at present visited.

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AMERICAN POLICY AND ARAB-ISRAELI PEACE

Our Course in the Light of Near East Realities

HAL LEHRMAN

DURING a recent visit to Israel this writer spent an evening with a group of army commanders. Their senior officer gazed toward the nearby hills of Jordan and bitterly said: "In Palestinian times the Arabs sometimes broke out and began to kill. If the British Mandate police interfered, the Arabs stopped. If the British didn't, the Arabs paraded the streets and shouted 'The government is with us!'—and killed more Jews. Today the Arabs are killing people again. This time, the UN is in charge. But the UN does not interfere. It gives the Arabs microphones. It lets the killers make speeches. And over there"—he gestured at the night-shrouded border—"the Arabs now are shouting 'The *world* is with us!' With such incentive to murder, why should they ever make peace?"

This officer felt perhaps more intimate outrage than most Israelis. As a child, in a remote kibbutz, he had seen his whole family slaughtered by marauding Arabs. Yet, as a man and citizen, his views reflect a national attitude. There are few Israelis without a sense of personal injury from Arab action, and not many more who do not blame the UN—and the United States—for, willingly or unwillingly, encouraging Arab truculence.

They know that the United States is Israel's friend. They are intensely pro-American by instinct, kinship, need, and gratitude. But in one important corner of their collective mind they tend to identify the United States with the UN, and with American military personnel holding prominent posts in armistice commissions. Many Israelis rightly or wrongly attribute unfavorable UN behavior to Washington's direct instigation. And, entirely apart from the UN, the conviction is deep in Israel that the United States, as the dominant power in the Middle East, pursues policies whose results are often unhappy for Israel. Since the Arabs profess to read the same American policies in an exactly opposite light, the United States finds herself resented by both sides.

IN THIS three-way argument, it is important to note and stress at once, for American readers, that Israel and the United States *agree* on several large and fundamental principles. These principles are relevant to the Israeli-Arab dispute, essential to the American national interest in the Middle East—and rejected by the Arabs.

Washington and Jerusalem accept in full the need of the following for the *entire* southeast Mediterranean area:

1. Introduction or continuation of far-reaching programs for democratic social reform and economic improvement.

2. Restoration or maintenance of peace and stability within and among all the countries.

3. Recognition of the common menace of Soviet totalitarianism.

4. Organization of a regional defense against that menace.

Furthermore the United States—although pro-Israel opinion sometimes suspects Wash-

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DEEP disagreement exists between the United States and Israel on ways to reduce Holy Land tensions. Each side believes that the other's "mistakes" are inflaming the Arab-Israeli crisis. HAL LEHRMAN, just returned from his third trip through the Middle East, here reports the Israeli *and* American viewpoints. In a previous article, "Kibya, Jerusalem, and the River Jordan," in April, he discussed some of the more local issues of disagreement between Israel and the West. Mr. Lehrman, born in New York City in 1911, studied at Cornell and the Sorbonne. After staff posts with the Associated Press, Havas, *Newsweek*, and other publications, he served as wartime director of the Office of War Information in Turkey. Since then he has free-lanced for many newspapers and magazines, lectured, and written two books, *Russia's Europe* (1947) and *Israel: The Beginning and Tomorrow* (1952).

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ington of the contrary—is sure that Israel is in the Middle East to stay. No responsible American policy-maker envisages the possibility, or desirability, of Israel's disappearance. The United States knows that this would contribute nothing to the strength or unity of the region, and would create problems as grievous as those which now prevail.

The Arabs, on the other hand, are less inclined today to acknowledge Israel's existence as permanent than at any time since their 1948 invasion of the infant state. They do not desire peace. They see Israel, not the Soviets, as their common enemy. They feel no compelling need to prepare against Communist aggression. The attitudes of Arab leaders toward the economic and social betterment of their people range from lukewarmness to total antagonism.

THE disagreements between Israel and the United States are disagreements between friends, not foes. Nevertheless, they cannot be lightly treated. They carry a high emotional charge: the strong fear on the part of both the United States and Israel that the other's errors, if persisted in, may produce an explosion—not between themselves, but between Israel and the Arabs.

One should distinguish between two categories of disagreements in Israeli-American relations. The first type is what might be called "classic"—being general disagreements, not over a particular issue or of limited duration, but long-time and springing from prime causes. These causes are the emergence of Israel, the Arab refusal to accept her, her own need to survive, and the American need to fit the Arabs somehow into free-world planning. These differences, manifest from the start, have not shrunk perceptibly, since the situation which created them has not essentially changed.

The second type of Israeli-American disagreements arise from the first, but are tactical, specific, immediate, and concerned with day-to-day issues. They shift ground as other elements in the particular dispute shift ground and the dispute itself moves forward. In the current phase of the Arab-Israeli crisis, observers see a tendency for the United States and Israeli positions to converge tactically. Each tactical position, however, remains attached to its unchangeable "classic" base. The gap of disagreement, though reduced, is still wide enough to cause dangerous tension and frequent deadlock.

The long-time disagreements are over two questions. Are the Arabs capable of regional cooperation? If so, how enlist their cooperation?

Without defining the form or degree of such cooperation, the United States affirms that the Arabs are not only capable of it, but indispensable to it. The United States proposes to get their participation by persuasion and conciliation.

Israel strongly doubts that the Arabs, given the nature of their present leadership and social structures, can be organized at all for a positive contribution to regional unity. And even if they can, Israel believes that the application of sweet reasonableness and nothing else to the Arabs will fail.

A DEPENDABLE partner, the Israelis contend, should have a good previous record, an awareness of the partnership's common objective, and a degree of stability at home. He should also give evidence of good faith.

Where, or when, has the Arab world cooperated substantially in any large-scale economic or political undertaking sponsored by the West? Nowhere, reply the Israelis, except in oil exploitation—an operation conducted with private Western companies, not governments, for the profit of native rulers and regimes, not of their peoples. Arab response to Western offers of economic aid has been grudging. In World War II the Arab leaders showed, at best, indifference to the Allied cause; at worst, as in Iraq, they sided with the Axis. The Arabs are incapable, it is asserted, of cooperating even among themselves—except for negative purposes. The British conjured up the Arab League in hopes that it would help unify the Middle East and assist the British in controlling that area. The League has produced Arab unity on nothing except antagonism to Israel and the West—including the British.

Is the Arab world anti-Soviet? Communist parties, it is true, have been outlawed, but mainly because they seemed to be against the local regime, not because they were a conspiracy in favor of a foreign power. Indeed, the Communist parties themselves in Arab countries are often muddled in doctrine, ignorant of Marxism, and even of current Muscovite gospel. In this they re-

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flect the greater ignorance of the Arab ruling class. For most Arab potentates and effendis, Moscow is very remote geographically and intellectually—so remote as almost not to exist, certainly not as a threat. Arabs have encountered Russians at the UN and, if anything, liked them, as Jordan's parliament recently indicated by sending formal thanks to Andrei Vishinsky.

No, declare the Israelis, the only "menace" the Arabs see is Israel—"imperialist, ambitious, aggressive Zionism." The Arabs proclaim this on every occasion. Western efforts to secure Arab participation in an anti-Soviet defense system have been and will continue futile, Israelis predict. The Arab rulers are so innocent of Soviet totalitarianism's true meaning for themselves—their total destruction—that they sometimes even declare readiness to throw themselves into Moscow's arms rather than make peace with the real "enemy," the State of Israel.

DO THE Arabs have enough internal stability to participate in cooperative international ventures? Recent headlines from the Middle East, Israelis point out, say no. Lebanon at one recent juncture was changing cabinets almost daily. In Syria and Egypt the local strong men—on whom the United States had openly reckoned as pillars of reform and regional defense—have exposed themselves as straw-men. Where is the Syrian savior, Adib Shishakli? Where is Egypt's great hope, Mohammed Naguib?

The Israelis invite world opinion to compare the Arab with the Israeli picture. When David Ben Gurion retired as prime minister, a new government came tranquilly and democratically into office after inter-party negotiations and a parliamentary vote of confidence. In the Arab world, ten kings, presidents, and premiers have been assassinated, exiled, or otherwise violently deposed since 1945.

The Israelis call attention to the incessant Arab propaganda charge that it is Israel who threatens regional stability by lawlessness, terrorism, and territorial ambitions. Was there ever a better opportunity for Israel to prove this charge than during the late convulsions in Egypt or Syria? With the Syrian defense forces split down the middle between Shishakli and his rivals, what effective resistance could have been offered to an Israeli invasion? Could anything have prevented capture of Damascus by the Israeli army? The occasion for adventure with little risk was as golden as in 1951, when King Abdullah's assassination threw Arab Jerusalem into anarchy. The Israeli garrison in the New City could then have settled the problem of "divided" Jerusalem in a single afternoon. But no garrison marched. There was not even an emergency mobilization, although this would have been mere prudence in view of the chaotic situation on the other side of the border.

Where are similar proofs of good faith, and active will toward peace, the Israelis demand, from the Arabs? Defeated in a war they started, the Arabs obtained armistice agreements in which they pledged to negotiate a final peace. Yet in five years they have not moved one inch toward such negotiations. Instead, as one of the absolute prerequisites to peace talks, they call for Israel's repatriation of "a million refugees"—who would never, Israelis contend, have become refugees if the Arab League had not made war on Israel and then provoked panicky flight.

The Arabs further expose their bad faith, say the Israelis, by insisting on repatriation when they know that: (a) it is a social and economic impossibility for Israel to comply, because the society and economy which supported the former inhabitants have vanished; (b) it would create an intolerable security risk by establishing inside Israel a made-to-order fifth column. The Arab leaders continue to demand repatriation despite UN, American, and Israeli willingness to finance resettlement in amply available Arab territory under conditions which would immensely benefit the refugees and the countries absorbing them. These same leaders do virtually nothing to alleviate the wretchedness of their refugee kinsmen, and actually derive income from it through such devices as tariffs on food purchased and delivered for them by a UN agency.

NEVERTHELESS, the Israeli argument continues, the great powers persist in courting the Arabs as if they were trustworthy and desperately needed. Is it because the Arabs would otherwise run amok? Even in their threats the Arabs are unreliable, according to the Israelis. Before the General Assembly's vote on Partition, and later before the wide-

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spread diplomatic recognitions of the new state, and later still before the admission of Israel to the UN, the Arabs blustered that they would break diplomatic and commercial relations with governments taking pro-Israeli action. The governments went ahead—and there were no ruptures and no boycotts. The late King Ibn Saud warned he would cut off the flow of oil to the United States: not a drop of oil has been lost. When Belgium and Sweden were competing for a valuable Arab contract, Belgium delayed recognition of Israel but Sweden gave it: the Arabs awarded the contract to Sweden. Most flagrant of all, the Arabs threatened horrendous consequences for West Germany if Bonn signed a reparations treaty with Israel: Bonn signed, but the Arabs have increased rather than reduced their zeal for political and economic relations with West Germany.

On the other hand, Israelis declare, the Arabs do get tougher when taken seriously or conciliated. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles's temporary move against American economic aid to Israel, made—perhaps inadvertently—shortly after the Kibya incident though really linked to the B'not Ya'akov water dispute, caused the Arabs to feel they could attack Israel when they pleased; for if she retaliated the U. S. would chastise her. The same effect resulted from the Security Council resolution that denounced Israel for Kibya but failed to denounce Arab provocation, or to call for peace negotiations. In fact, the net outcome of the Eisenhower administration's apparently benevolent attitude toward the Arabs has been more Arab stubbornness—and greater American difficulties—though many informed Israelis concede that Washington, for all its large pronouncements, has actually *done* very little to justify Arab hopes. Nevertheless, Washington now finds it necessary to stress to the Arabs a point that needed no affirmation two years ago: its belief in the need and certainty of Israel's survival.

What should the powers do to win the Arabs, if they are to be won at all? Talk straight and act firmly, the Israelis recommend. Britain, to begin with, is in the position to compel cooperation with Israel by Jordan, currently the chief troublemaker. Deprived of British funds, personnel, and support, Jordan is nothing, and would disintegrate. The truth is, it is guessed, that Britain at times shows disfavor towards Israel simply in order not to be outdone in Arab eyes by the U.S. After thirty years' experience, the British have learned that appeasement of the Arabs won't work, as witness their present grimness in Egypt. But the U. S., Israelis think, seems to have taken up where Britain left off, and is repeating her mistakes.

Hypnotized by the fancied need for positive Arab friendship, Washington again and again holds back just when a strong stand could be decisive. Therefore, say the Israelis: dispel the Arabs' notion that the U.S. fears them. Make it clear that, if necessary, the West will go on with Israel alone. In the past, the Arabs have acquiesced when they had no alternative—as when they signed armistices with Israel. If they can again be confronted with no alternative, they may even make peace with Israel.

THESE current examples illustrate that "long-time" Israeli view which remains constant despite transitory events. There is a corresponding "long-time" American view. It admits, privately, that the Israeli case has a certain logic, but finds a serious flaw in the perspective: Israel sees clearly her own interests and grievances, but not the immensely larger frame in which the small Arab-Israeli conflict is set.

Israel is a pinpoint of territory with a population of less than two millions; the Arab world is almost a continent with more than 40 millions. Even if this mass were totally apathetic, it could not be ignored, nor could so huge a territory be treated as wasteland, the Americans point out. The people and the land are anything but apathetic. To test the soundness of Israeli assurances that firmness would bring tranquillity, one would have to risk the alternative possibility of conflagration. Such a risk is unthinkable.

The Israelis tell us to be stern, to use pressure, the Americans observe. But how? With what weapons? On whom? There once was a time when the Arab rulers could turn anti-Zionism on or off at will. They no longer enjoy such facilities for manipulating popular hysteria. True, Israel is a robust democracy, steadfastly on our side. By contrast, the Arab systems may well be decrepit, feudal, undependable. The paradox is that the democratic Israeli state would fall apart if out-

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side aid were cut off—but the backward Arab states could in their misery go on forever without any aid at all. Israel's very dependence on Western help encourages the Arabs. They calculate that boycott and harassment may yet cause her internal collapse, especially if the West can be persuaded to abandon her. So long as Israel's economy requires American bolstering, the Arabs will go on hoping—and talking tough. As for aid to the Arabs, they themselves spurn it, the Americans protest. Their leaders consider us and our gifts suspect. They are obsessed with fear and envy of Israel. Rather than make peace with her, they are ready to contemplate committing class and national suicide by selling out to the Soviets.

The American view contends that the Middle East—with its oil, communications, and bases—is too vital to jeopardize for any consideration. The Arab world possesses an indispensable asset which Israel lacks: space. Space for large armies, space for maneuver. Yes, Israel has a competent little army—but in global arithmetic it is of importance only to Israel. "As far as sheer value of territory is concerned," General Eisenhower once said, "there is no more strategically important area in the world" than the Middle East. Soviet influence would be ominous, Soviet seizure catastrophic. Widespread disorders could sap the entire Western position. Therefore we must placate the Arabs.

THESE, then, have been the changeless positions of the United States and Israel since 1948. However, interim policies on both sides have often swerved from them.

For example Israel, though sure that the Arabs cannot be conciliated, has on different occasions offered to do so, notably in the refugee dispute: by expressing willingness to take back a limited but sizable number of refugees, to discuss compensation before a general peace treaty, and by actually beginning to repay money left behind in refugees' blocked bank accounts. Similarly the United States, while anxious not to alienate the Arabs, has objected strongly to such things as Egyptian interference with Israeli cargoes in the Suez Canal. At times the American position in the UN, as on the Jerusalem question, has been closer to Israel's position than to that of the majority of the membership, and has been outvoted. As far back as during the Truman administration, the two governments were fairly agreed on what *should* be the settlements in the Jerusalem, refugee, Suez, and Arab-Israeli border-fixing disputes. The difference between them —and it of course was cardinal—was on how far to go in compelling Arab agreement as well.

It has not been generally noted that the Eisenhower administration has already made one tactical revision of fundamental significance that diminishes the projected role of the Arabs in Middle East defense. The change dates roughly from Dulles's visit to the area last summer. He went out seeking, as others before him, ways to bring the Arab states into some kind of regional security organization. He came home persuaded that —with one or possibly two exceptions—they were *for the time being* incapable of preparing any *active* defense against future Soviet aggression. Dulles had learned for himself that most of the Arab governments were too engrossed in hating Israel, too "neutralist" in the cold war, or even too amiably inclined toward Moscow. (The later fate of Naguib and Shishakli also showed him they were too unstable.) Of the two possible exceptions, Saudi Arabia seems more recently to have been scratched because of King Saud's excessive fulminations against Israel (tantamount to an appeal for Holy War) and certain disquieting views attributed to him concerning American oil contracts (reminiscent of Mossadegh). This leaves just Iraq. The cessation of efforts, even temporarily, to enlist the other Arab states in the Western defense system is seen—at least by Washington—as an important change in tactics in a direction desired by Israel.

BUT the Arabs, according to the classic American view, are still in the Middle East and still have to be courted. If they are not to be asked for active contribution to regional security, they must in any event be induced to refrain from hostility. To achieve this, the U. S. has now apparently taken up with renewed vigor the idea of improving the social and economic health of the Arab world through large American-financed development programs.

Since Congress is hardly likely to appropriate more for the Middle East in 1954-55 than in the current fiscal year, the Arabs

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may get more, and Israel less, than hitherto. Even if Congress does not cut the $130 million requested for next year, more than $14 million of this is expected to go to Iran, Libya, and Ethiopia, leaving under $116 million for Israel and the Arab states. The State Department is understood to be asking a free hand in allocating the balance, with a view to enabling larger Arab participation. This emphasis is justified in Washington by the following reasoning:

Since 1948 Israel has received just about as much in U. S. government grants ($191.6 million) as all the Arab countries together ($192.6), although the Arabs outnumber the Israelis thirty to one. Actually, the imbalance has been even greater in a sense, because Israel's share went entirely to her government, while only $68.2 million went to the Arab governments, the UN having spent the other $124.4 million directly on Arab refugees.

Israel admittedly has used her share well —so well, in fact, that her economy is now showing solid improvement. Aid to Israel may therefore begin to be shaved down. But the Arab territories continue to be sadly underdeveloped. The time has come for a major effort. In particular, there is urgent need to harness water resources in Lebanon and Jordan for power and irrigation. Plans are afoot for aid programs in Syria and Egypt too. All this, one American official has predicted, will "transform the Arab states out of recognition in the next five years." The inference is the Arabs will become more sturdy and enlightened, and less inclined to sabotage if cold war emergencies should arise.

BEFORE examining the Israeli reaction to this, one might inquire why Washington should think that the Arab regimes are suddenly going to reverse themselves and become eager for the same American aid which for several years they have either been rejecting outright or accepting in only puny amounts. Or why, in the few places where fairly substantial American- or UN-financed projects have been allowed, one should count on brilliant results tomorrow when until today the native performance has been so sluggish. In a major speech this April, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Henry A. Byroade, spoke of a "general evolution" now occurring in his area, "whereby leaders are becoming more responsive to the demands of public welfare." Is there really "general" evidence of this among the generals, landowners, and effendis? And if, as in Egypt, one now hears much *talk* of economic uplift, do the meager achievements recorded there justify optimism for the future?

Further, Israel is not to blame if her government was willing to take responsibility for the integration of *her* immigrants, and therefore directly received United States grants to maintain them, while the Arab governments declined responsibility for the refugees on *their* soil, compelling the United States to send the aid through non-Arab channels. Incidentally, the immigrants were also "refugees," about equal in number to the Arabs. And since when has the United States given her assistance according to size of population rather than need, capacity, and ability to use? There are fewer Greeks than Turks, but Greece has had more economic aid than Turkey. The yardstick has been economic, and Washington has never before suggested that a country which received less than another had the right to accuse the United States of being less friendly. As a matter of fact, American aid until now has gone to countries which, by definition, were presumably friendly. Can the Arabs, by any stretch of the imagination, be so described?

The Israelis wryly declare themselves "flattered" by American statements that they have employed United States aid well. They suggest that, if this is so, why reduce it prematurely and endanger the whole investment? For this fiscal year, Israel has received $52.5 million from the Foreign Operations Administration. There is reason to believe that the State Department now wants to cut this down to thirty-five or even thirty millions. Such a slash, Israelis fear, would do much harm at a crucial moment. It may not be evident in Washington, but Israel has a considerable way to go before grants-in-aid can be sharply cut without hampering the pace of a development on which the United States itself has counted so much for the health and strength of a vital area.

As for increased economic assistance to the Arabs, the Israelis could hardly make legitimate objection, and they know it. Israel does not say the United States should withhold such aid—even though, in terms of power, improvement of the Arabs' economy

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would clearly strengthen them vis-à-vis Israel. In fact, Israel has always felt that a prime reason for mass Arab antagonism to her is the plight of that mass. She would sincerely welcome, I think, any and all efforts to lift the Arab peoples from their misery and make them both less susceptible to anti-foreign hysteria and more inclined to good neighborliness. This has long been the view also of true friends of America in the Middle East, and of Israel's friends over here, including the most fervent American Zionists. The one kind of aid to the Arabs which Israel and her supporters do deplore is *military*. That is why there has been no protest against reported American plans for extra economic help to the Arabs—but an avalanche of protest against the recent decision to give arms to Iraq.

THE Iraqi military-aid program stems from the revision in American thinking mentioned above about regional defense patterns. Having discovered that the Arabs are generally "not ready" for alliance with the West, the United States has evolved a so-called "Northern Tier" formula. Instead of building *outward* by organizing the Middle East for defense as an ultimate target of Soviet assault, the new plan starts with the Soviet frontier itself and works *backward*. Thus Turkey and Pakistan become the core of the system, with northern Arab territory (Iraq) and oil fields (Saudi Arabia, in the first concept) on the fringe as a defensive extension.

The United States believes that the "Northern Tier" is a large concession to Israeli views. Earlier regional proposals—"Supreme Allied Command Middle East" (SACME) and "Middle East Defense Organization" (MEDO) — had been joint Anglo-American projects. They envisaged inclusion of *all* the Arab states, without any real indication of where Israel would fit. The new proposal is purely American in concept and financing, and excludes all the hostile countries on Israel's frontiers.

Iraq, the Americans point out, does not touch Israeli territory (nor does Saudi Arabia). This shows how sympathetically Israel's concern is taken into account in Washington. Iraq is sworn not to use the American-donated equipment except for defense against the Soviet. This has been demanded by Washington as an ironclad precondition. Moreover, the amount of arms to be given is not serious. The bulk of a $30-million fund at the State Department's disposal is for Pakistan. At most, only about $5 million probably will be available for Iraq. There has been no Congressional or public clamor against the much larger program for Pakistan. Why all the excitement about Iraq? From the American point of view, the insignificant quantity going to this one Arab state makes the grant purely "symbolic." It is meant to serve notice on Moscow, not strengthen Iraq against Israel. So why worry?

AMERICAN critics of the State Department regard such arguments as hovering on naivety.

If the arms for Iraq are merely "symbolic," the critics contend, how are they ever going to impress the Soviet Union? Will not Moscow, on the contrary, regard the transaction as bluff? The Russians know, if the West has forgotten, that even an Iraqi army armed to the teeth would hardly slow one Soviet column. In World War II, the troops of the pro-Nazi revolutionary Iraqi regime folded up before a handful of British soldiers. The "arms for Iraq" policy is an invention, not of the Pentagon, but of the State Department, it is suggested—to conciliate the Arab world politically.

But a "symbol," though worthless against the Kremlin, can be deadly against Israel. It is all right to say that the U. S. is for peace in the Middle East. The question Israelis ask is: Are the Arabs for peace? Especially the Iraqis, who are perhaps the most venomously anti-Israel of all the Arab peoples, indeed the focus of anti-*Jewish* feeling in the region. Iraq went over to Hitler once, or tried to. After Israel's emergence, around 90 per cent of the Jews in Iraq fled while they could. Some who could not were hanged in Bagdad's public squares. Israeli passengers in an airplane making an emergency landing in Iraq were jailed and treated like criminals. As the loudest saber-rattler against Israel, can Iraq be trusted with gifts of shooting weapons? If there is any "symbol" in the American plan, it is simply this: Iraq will take it as proof either that the United States can be beguiled into believing her pledges of peaceful intention,

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or that the United States knows her real intention and doesn't care.

Arms to Iraq, Israelis say, strengthens the *Arab* (not just Iraqi) resolve to avoid a negotiated Israeli settlement. Encouraging the Iraqis would be troublesome enough. They do not border on Israel, true, but in the Arab war they contributed five regimental combat units and over one hundred armored vehicles which, while the Jewish defense was spread out, managed to cut Jerusalem's water supply and get within eight miles of Tel Aviv. What is ominous is that it is not Iraq alone but the Arab League which the U.S. is arming spiritually.

Against Israel the League performs like a team. Egypt's blockade at Suez, Jordan's refusal to obey Article XII of her armistice, Syria's meddling with electric projects—such obstructions, the Israelis emphasize, are due to the League, not the spasmodic malevolence of individual states. It is simply foolish to compare the cases of Iraq and Pakistan. In the latter instance, where India is the complainant against United States policy, Pakistan is smaller in land and population than India, is not at war with India, does not insist that she is at war with India, and does not periodically announce her intention to destroy India. Exactly the reverse of all this prevails in Iraq, and the U.S. in effect is telling all Arabs they may proceed in their vendetta against Israel and not distress the State Department.

And, the Israelis add, if Iraq is an ally of the United States, then what about arms for Israel too? Aren't we at least as good an ally? About two years ago, Israel submitted an arms-aid request to Washington. Though Israel was declared eligible to *buy* arms here the State Department took no action on the aid request, explaining that the United States had not yet developed a policy for arms grants to the Middle East. Well, say the Israelis, now you have a policy. If you give Iraq arms—is there no place in your policy for a grant of weapons to us?

ECONOMIC and military assistance to Arab states affects Israel, not directly, but because she is part of the Middle East. But other facets of American policy directly affect specific Arab-Israeli disputes. In this category, comprising such matters as the Jordan border and Suez, Israeli and American policy have lately shown a trend, willy-nilly, toward mutual accommodation. Both sides have been learning that the Arabs are very, very hard to get along with.

The Eisenhower administration entered the Middle East with the firm belief that it could be pacified and organized by bold and sweeping approaches. Mr. Dulles learned that these were not advisable. He then tried the piecemeal method, attempting to patch one hole here, sew another there. This only made the Arabs more intransigent, particularly towards Israel. Despairing of swift solutions, the United States has since fallen back on a tactic of merely keeping things from getting worse. Only the other day Assistant Secretary Byroade publicly confessed that the possibility of a peace treaty "just does not exist." In the UN the United States has taken up a juridical position: let us all observe the legalities, respect the Charter, fulfill pledges, obey injunctions. This has brought American and Israeli lines superficially closer. The process has been aided by the Arabs, who are habitually belligerent and extreme—and by the Israelis, who have increasingly adopted a legal attitude inside the UN, however vigorous their conduct may have become outside.

Thus the Americans—and the British—have found themselves more and more arguing for the Israeli view. Once Israel had stopped defying the UN suspension order at the B'not Ya'akov diggings, the West was able to look into the case and see that the project was not, as the Syrians had claimed, a menace to Arab life and limb. It was Commissar Vishinsky, not Ambassador Lodge, who prevented the Security Council from achieving a decision. When Israel appealed against Egyptian defiance of UN orders on Suez, the West again had to take note, particularly since the British had their own reason for being unhappy over Suez. In the Jordan dispute the West supported the Israeli position that *all* aspects of border unrest be examined and that Israelis and Jordanians negotiate face to face, while the Soviets seconded the Arab refusal—for fear of being ultimately inveigled into a peace conference—to talk about anything except their own wounds.

Meanwhile, the Israelis have begun to realize that the present emergency is too desperate for total solutions, that small mea-

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sures which may work are better than large ones which won't. In an earlier period, when the armistice agreements were more or less functioning, the Israeli objective was peace, entire and unqualified. The West was thought capable of compelling the Arabs to negotiate, and a final settlement was believed practical. The past months, however, have seen Arab truculence wax instead of wane. The Arabs have not only rejected a peace treaty, but have been retreating from the armistices too. Israelis are sure this would not have happened if U. S. policy had not inflamed Arab illusions. Now they would consider it an achievement just to restore order on the frontiers.

Israel would desire, among other things, extension of the 1950 Anglo-Franco-American guarantee against territorial changes by aggression to include a ban on other forms of violence such as border raids and economic hostility. She would like the United States to force the Arabs to help in solving the refugee problem (as suggested in a recent Congressional report). She observes that, if Egypt is allowed to continue the Suez blockade under cover of Soviet veto, it will be the sole instance of such tolerance of Soviet obstructionism in the non-Communist world. (Previously the West, when it has tried, has been able to circumvent Russian veto, as in Greece and Iran—and even in Syria and Lebanon, when Moscow vetoed a resolution facilitating withdrawal of foreign troops from those countries after World War II!) But peace is so remote that Israel would settle at this time for mere armistice enforcement.

RETURN to the armistices would be a harsh substitute for the real peace Israel needs. But it is nonetheless terribly important—not only for Jerusalem but also for Washington, which has lately expressed panicky fear of an Arab shift toward the Soviets. Without effective armistices, there is the danger—let it be emphasized here—of an *Israeli* outburst. If this occurs, the aftermath will make present Arab-Israeli friction seem trivial.

The incessant turmoil on the borders has worn Israel's patience down. When this happens in any country, the result is a move toward extremism—and increased strain among friends at home as well as against foes abroad. Israel is no exception.

Views on what to do about the Arabs have been varied and bitter. There has been a difference between the government's public statements and its discussions *in camera*; a difference between the civilian leaders and the military leaders; an even greater difference between responsible officials and public opinion—which has no responsibility and, in a democracy, submits to no controls. But the greatest peril of all is that these differences are now, dimly but perceptibly, beginning to fuse into agreement. If this process continues—and the persistence of Arab hostility under cloak of the armistices will make it continue—then even the armistices may be swept away.

The divergences in view and expression were already apparent after Kibya last October. In the UN, Israel expressed formal regret at the killing of Arab women and children. But in the Knesset, no orator dared, with the country listening, to denounce the attackers. In the cabinet, one faction regretted only that this raid by para-military Israeli frontier settlers had slipped out of control. Many other ministers, however, who had not been told in advance, were outraged by Kibya; even in Ben Gurion's own party, a caucus of Mapai ministers revealed shock. Yet no outward sign of backing down was ever made. The blot on Israel's name for civilized behavior—and on the Prime Minister's reputation for truthfulness as impugned in the Security Council proceedings —was allowed, almost casually, to remain.

Failure to offer a convincing explanation for Kibya (or any explanation at all to counter the unrestrained Arab charges during the first inarticulate days) was partly due to the ineptitude of the persons in Israel handling the government's press relations. But it gradually became apparent that it was also due to a defiant attitude at top level, combined with confusion and division down the line. Even weeks later, after the UN's bald denunciation of Israel, when the full story of Kibya could only have clarified the situation to Israel's advantage, this writer was denied clearance of the facts by highest authority. To this day there are cabinet members who have not yet been told exactly who attacked Kibya, how, and why.

More ominous was the temper in the streets. Some Israeli citizens expressed horror. More were sorry that innocent persons

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had died. But most of them expressed no remorse at all—and even some satisfaction—over the attack itself: "How long are we to sit and let them slaughter us? It's time we taught them a lesson. Is Jewish blood cheaper than Arab? If the Arabs want war, let it be war!" Later, the long UN wrangles, the speeches, resolutions, and voting, got little attention. The average Israeli just didn't seem to care that his country was being condemned. If anything, he felt contempt for the impotence of a faraway conclave of diplomats eternally passing resolutions.

IN THE early post-Kibya period it was also possible to detect several basic differences on what to do next. The extremist view was voiced by the Herut party and other descendants of old fire-eating Revisionism, who called for counter-action as cynical and deliberate as Arab action but with more sweep and impact. It was charged that Kibya had been criminally bungled. The government should first have staged a demonstration by Israel's border settlements *against* the Israeli government, including demands for reprisals and even clashes with police. Then the settlers could have roared across the frontier and wreaked systematic havoc, to be followed by official disavowal and the explanation that the settlers had been goaded beyond endurance. Then the world would, presumably, have sympathized with the embattled Israeli farmers—and the Arabs would have been stricken with dread, as at Deir Yassin.

Next came the army, less vociferous but not much less extreme. Top commanders were not prepared to recommend open attack in force on the Arabs—inviting possible UN sanctions and embroilment with the British through the Anglo-Jordanian defense alliance. But they were willing to contemplate calculated risks falling short of organized war. Many regretted that UN intervention in the Independence War had come so soon. "If we had just kept going a little while longer," one officer told me wistfully, "we could have had Suez without any trouble. We could have cut out Jordan's 'Little Triangle.' We could have reached the Litani River in the north. There was nothing in our way. We could have restored practically all of Mandate Palestine. And we'd have no problem now about secure frontiers or room for water-development programs. . . ."

The conviction was spreading among the military that the Arabs were heading for war. If so, shouldn't Israeli policy be revised to take the inevitability of war into account? Wouldn't it be desirable, even, to have the test come soon rather than late? I met no officer with doubts of victory. The problem seemed rather to be how to have war without starting it. It was hoped that the Arabs would oblige. In the interim, it was felt that all Arab outbreaks should be met by limited but swift and emphatic reprisal. There were even some who wanted authorization to smash into Egyptian-held Gaza or forcibly "straighten" the Jordan frontier. The military does not make government policy in Israel, but it is popular and has influence. There were enough civilian leaders too, in perhaps subtler manner, who envisaged similar tactics as the best reply to Arab terrorism.

In opposition to such "activities" were, first and least representative, the Communists and their followers, who automatically blamed "fascism" for the friction between the equally downtrodden Arab and Jewish masses. After them stood the sincere and near-saintly but numerically insignificant group around the magazine *Ner*, which advocates brotherhood with the Arabs and large concessions to prove Israeli benevolence. But the main effective opposition centered around those elements of Israeli leaders who considered the West's good opinion and American friendship indispensable to Israel.

Especially to men dealing with the state's economic problems, or with its foreign relations, American support was so obviously crucial that gambling with it for any restricted objective like free use of a river or reprisal against a raid seemed sheer irresponsibility. In particular, officials in the Foreign Ministry and diplomatic service—who understood international opinion best and were obliged daily to justify Israel's behavior to her friends overseas—regarded the impatient military as dangerous romantics. What good would it accomplish to seek a violent solution? Granted that the situation was intolerable, would it be any less intolerable if an Israeli assault, such as a march into the Triangle, created a larger Arab irredentism, this time with the whole world behind the Arabs? And if the UN ordered the army to withdraw, what then?

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THE selection of Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett to replace Ben Gurion, the departing prime minister, disclosed a major effort to install moderation in an office that had been previously distinguished for a boldness which many thought insufficiently aware of Israel's interests abroad. But conditions permitting a prudent policy have degenerated. Frontier disorder has multiplied. Temper inside Israel has risen instead of cooled. Activists have gained ground at the expense of the moderates, and even the latter have begun to turn. After Kibya it was still possible for an Israeli government to apologize to the world. But five months later, after the slaughter of eleven Israelis in a Negev bus and Arab incursions from all around Nahallin in Jordan, there was an undisguised Israeli assault on the Arab Legion and National Guard in that outpost—and there was no apology, nor was any apology possible. There is less and less attempt to minimize such reprisals as the "uncontrollable" response of private citizens provoked to fury by Arab assassins—and more and more impatience with armistice commissions. The sentiment is growing that, all else failing, prudence itself now dictates the frank use of force against force, or else the Arabs will get out of hand entirely. And as a plain political fact, any Israeli government that now tried a policy of the other cheek might shortly be put out of office. Its successor would be no comfort to the surviving advocates of moderation.

In the view even of those who make the United States the cornerstone of Israel's future, the deterioration of Arab-Israeli relations is due to the deplorable American penchant for encouragement of Arab intransigence. Washington's spokesmen in the UN may frequently take legalist positions on the Israeli side—but any benefit is erased by Washington's parallel practice of verbal rebuke for Israel. Such declarations—reinforced at intervals by positive acts like the Iraqi arms grant—feed Arab flames with every syllable.

What could the United States do at this late date, it is asked, to strengthen the moderates in Israel? Certainly not continue in the vein of recent State Department announcements, the moderates suggest. Not summon Israel to cease acting like a "conqueror," as was recommended in one speech which the Arabs waved aloft as proof of their charges. Nor advise Israel publicly to reassure the Arabs, by "correcting" her drive for immigration, that she has no expansionist dreams—thereby intimating to the Arabs that Washington agrees with them about alleged Israeli "imperialist" ambitions.

If anybody needs to be reassured today, the moderates observe, it is the people of Israel. They are beginning to suspect that the United States might consider Israel expendable if her disappearance would facilitate Arab cooperation. They are beginning to doubt that Washington would react with more than mournful regrets if the Arabs ever drove Israel into the sea. They want the United States to cease bewailing every Israeli violation of an armistice without stigmatizing, at least with equal energy, every Arab violation. They contrast the outcry over Kibya with the apathy over the Negev bus murders, the swift action against Israel at B'not Ya'akov with the lack of action against Egypt at Suez, or against Jordan over Article XII. They want the United States to worry less about losing ground with the Arabs and make the Arabs worry more about losing ground with the United States. If Washington can devise means to give large-scale aid to the Arabs, then Washington can also devise means to give them a sense of responsibility and bring them to negotiate with Israel. This will never be accomplished, Israelis are persuaded, unless the United States stops wavering and abandons a species of double-talk which convinces the Arabs that their hostility to Israel is sympathetically regarded in Washington as the natural yearning of a great and noble people for self-expression.

IT WOULD be rash to predict how far the Israelis, in their indignation, are prepared to go. From this distance, one can only note that an extreme solution would endanger everything achieved by Israel and the world's good will until now. But Israel would not be the sole loser. The breaking of the dikes around her would be a major defeat for Western defense in the Middle East. There is deadly historic irony in the prospect that the United States, by straining at all costs to win Arab stability, might lose the one element of stability which we truly possess in the Middle East.

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CHARLES FLEISCHER'S RELIGION OF DEMOCRACY

An Experiment in American Faith

ARTHUR MANN

IN THE career of Charles Fleischer, who served Temple Adath Israel of Boston —later the congregation of Joshua Loth Liebman—around the turn of the century, and who left Judaism while still relatively young, we may observe at its fullest the impact of American religious liberalism on American Judaism. I do not intend to draw any lessons or moral from Fleischer's story here—it is presented as a chapter of Jewish religious history in America.

The history of religion in America is largely concerned with the transformation of the theologies, rituals, and loyalties that were brought to this country by some forty million immigrants. The quest for democracy and unity out of diversity accounts for much of this transformation. In forging a conception of their own peoplehood, Americans learned to overlook doctrinal differences and agree on moral fundamentals. What the Deists hoped to achieve without a church has in large degree come to pass in the land of many churches. Indeed, the idea that religion is handmaiden to democracy has made such headway that American Catholicism, American Protestantism, and American Judaism appear like parallel shoots on a common stock.

SCHOLARS who write that Reform Judaism "began" in Germany and simply "came here" with German Jewish immigrants not only overlook the pivotal role of the second and third generations, but distort the picture especially in ignoring the importance of native influences, particularly those of secular liberalism and of Unitarianism, on Reform.

In 19th-century Boston, general religious developments were peculiarly suited to influencing the Judaism of that day. Unitarianism, spreading and becoming ever more radical throughout the 19th century, was a remarkably close parallel to a similarly rising Jewish tendency, particularly emphasized in 19th-century Germany—the emphasis on Judaism as the "religion of reason."

When Charles Fleischer arrived in Boston in 1894 to assume his rabbinical duties at Temple Israel, the Reverend Dr. Edward Everett Hale welcomed him at the railroad station with the words: "Now, my son, you too are one of the preachers of New England." These words reflect the respect which Solomon Schindler, Fleischer's predecessor, had won for the Reform synagogue, and the faith of Boston's progressive Yankee clergyman that Judaism would contribute to the evolving civilization of America. Throughout his tenure at Temple Israel, from 1894

PECULIARLY representative of a bygone chapter in American religio-cultural history was Charles Fleischer, rabbi of Temple Adath Israel in Boston from 1894 to 1911, and later the founder and leader of the non-sectarian "Sunday Commons." Fleischer's radical reinterpretation of Judaism, and his substitution for it of a "religion" of progress and American democracy, was the rash expression of an impulse which, ARTHUR MANN indicates, has importantly shaped the religious temper and practice of the various ethnic groups of this country, and served to bring the different faiths closer together. The apparent failure of Fleischer's venture does not detract from the continuing reality of that impulse in our society. Mr. Mann, assistant professor of history at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was born in New York City in 1922 and attended Brooklyn College and Harvard. He writes: "In the preparation of this article I profited from the insights of Dr. John Haynes Holmes, Minister Emeritus of the Community Church in New York. Mrs. Mabel Leslie-Fleischer, widow of Charles Fleischer, kindly allowed me the use of her late husband's personal papers and library."

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through 1911, and as head of the non-sectarian Sunday Commons, from 1912 to 1918, Charles Fleischer spoke to Bostonians, both Jews and non-Jews, who gravitated toward the new, the strange, the experimental. By 1905, a Boston newspaperman wrote that "no man in Boston . . . [has] a greater following among the young intellectuals."

Charles Fleischer was an immigrant who hoped to emancipate himself and his congregation from old forms by embracing the American concept that religion must participate in the amelioration of society. The times were then with him. John Dewey and Charles Beard, Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt, Theodore Dreiser and Upton Sinclair, John Haynes Holmes and Stephen S. Wise—these figures symbolize how Americans around the beginning of this century transformed their conceptions of man, society, and God. These men and their many co-workers and followers differed with one another, yet all shared the hope that the mind and the spirit could be used to make society and men better. They emphasized action over contemplation, observation over dogma, evolutionary growth over the maintenance of the status quo. Fleischer's age was the age when the rebels triumphed, when non-conformist ministers, scholars, and statesmen basked in the high noon of reform.

EARLY in the 20th century, Temple Israel's rabbi became a rebel too. By temperament he had always been one. He outraged his superiors at Hebrew Union College by flirting with the agnostic ideas of Robert Ingersoll. Called before the president, he retorted: "I am not a follower of Ingersoll, but I do think for myself." In Boston he continued to think for himself, championing what was new. He put Sunday services on a permanent basis at his synagogue, inaugurated the practice of exchanging pulpits with both Unitarian and Trinitarian Christians, and fused Judaism with the Transcendentalism of Theodore Parker and Ralph Waldo Emerson. He was the first Boston rabbi to invite social reformers to speak from his pulpit. He composed verses for the summer colony of liberal intellectuals at Greenacre, New Hampshire, and was honored with the presidency of the Browning Society. He was also the first Boston clergyman to go up in a balloon. Charles Fleischer loved novelty almost for its own sake; his motto was that men should "always [show] dissatisfaction with things as they are. . . ."

Endowed with extreme good looks, Temple Israel's minister also made rebellion romantically attractive. A bachelor throughout his tenure at the synagogue (he married only in 1919), he was considered one of the handsomest unattached males in Boston. Evangeline Adams has described him as the "Beau Brummel of the Back Bay," while one newspaperman was struck with his resemblance to the Renaissance painter Andrea del Sarto. Fleischer's good friend John Singer Sargent believed that he looked like Edgar Allen Poe, and recorded this impression in a black and white portrait—arched eyebrows, dark eyes, black hair, luxuriant mustache, thin nose. The impression is one of sensitivity, and Fleischer's ever-present black silk "artist's" tie heightened it. Yet there was nothing delicate about the man. He was of average height and sturdy build, and went off with Sargent to climb mountains in Alaska.

His voice, contemporaries report, was clear, lyrical, and sweet; and he often expressed his thoughts in the language of Browning and Byron, Whitman and Emerson, whom he read prodigiously. His bachelor apartment went with his manner. Somewhat bohemian, it contained flowers, the art of half a dozen nations (including a frieze of Orpheus and Eurydice), and books that spilled from the shelves to the floor, tables, and chairs. For companionship he kept two pets, "a King Charles Spaniel, which announces all guests and sees them to the portal when they leave, and a Swiss canary, whose jubilant carolling is smothered in his throat by an admonition from his master when the talk is of too weighty a character for such an accompaniment." The rabbi also sang well.

HIS origins were humble. Born in Breslau, Germany, December 23, 1871, he emi-

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grated nine years later to America with his widowed mother and three brothers. They settled on New York's East Side. Charles was the intellectual of the family, earned a bachelor of arts degree at CCNY (1888), went on to Cincinnati for a D.D. at Hebrew Union College and a Litt. B. at the University of Cincinnati, both of which he attained in 1893, and served Rabbi Berkowitz of Philadelphia as an assistant until called to Boston in 1894. Given his talents in music, art, scholarship, and oratory, he soon became a Boston institution. As his popularity increased, Unitarians, progressive Congregationalists, non-Jewish ladies' clubs, and reform groups of one sort or another sought him out as a lecturer. He delivered a paper at the Theodore Parker Centenary, contributed to the *Arena,* joined the liberal Twentieth Century Club, wrote a column for Hearst's Boston *American,* and lectured throughout New England on democracy, education, and the relations of Jews and Gentiles. In time his associates and friends included President Eliot of Harvard, Robert A. Woods of South End House, Edwin D. Mead of the *New England Magazine,* as well as numbers of Unitarian clergymen. After 1906, when Temple Israel, on his urging, adopted Sunday services, he preached to an audience that regularly numbered nearly as many Gentiles as Jews.

Here was the rub. The non-Jews who admired the rabbi were liberal Yankees who, like Fleischer, embraced the traditions of the New England Renaissance. Thus, Benjamin Orange Flower, editor of the *Arena,* complimented the Jewish minister in the best way he thought possible by placing him among the "young scholars . . . coming to the front and taking up the work once so gloriously carried forward by Lowell, Channing, Parker, Emerson, Whittier, and Phillips." Flower meant that Temple Israel's pastor was more interested in sociology than theology, more devoted to uniting the human race than perpetuating ethnic and religious divisions.

But could Fleischer believe himself to be heir of New England's great progressive Protestants and remain a Jew? How long he struggled over his two heritages is not clear, but by 1908 he made it known that he preferred Emerson to Moses; and in 1911 he left Temple Israel and Judaism to found the Sunday Commons, a non-sectarian religious congregation dedicated to the amelioration of society and the fusion of America's diverse stocks into a new people. It was Boston's first community church.

In 1919 he married Mabel R. Leslie, a gifted and intellectual Vermonter of Scotch descent and Presbyterian upbringing. The Reverend Dr. Charles Cummings, successor to Edward Everett Hale, performed the marriage ceremony, one given a new form in which "the bridegroom verbally recognized the full equality of his bride." After the Sunday Commons failed to survive the 1914-1918 war and the reaction that followed it, the Fleischers left Boston in 1922 for New York, she to practice law and he to do editorial work for Hearst's *Evening Journal.* Fleischer died on July 2, 1942, surrounded in death, as in life, by friends who had rejected "the parochialism of race and religion." Dr. John Haynes Holmes of the Community Church of New York officiated at the funeral, delivering a eulogy that lasted for more than an hour. Fleischer's body was cremated, and his remains placed in a non-sectarian cemetery, as he had requested before death.

CHARLES FLEISCHER, paradoxically, had been installed in the pulpit of Temple Israel to preserve the Jewish identity of his congregation. His predecessor, Solomon Schindler, after successfully instituting a number of reforms (prayerbook in English, organ, choir, family pew, male worship without hats), had outraged his congregants when he sanctioned intermarriage with liberal Christians. Nor did he succeed in converting them to the socialism of Edward Bellamy, which he embraced as a means of creating a society free of class, race, and religious differences. The Temple's congregation comprised second-generation American Jews who were businessmen of one sort or another and who aspired to a Judaism

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along the rational lines of Unitarianism. They did not want to revolutionize society—they wanted to belong to it. They wanted humanism and humanitarianism, but they wanted it within Judaism. They would not convert the synagogue into a community church or a society for ethical culture. In short, they would melt the frozen forms of Orthodoxy, but they would not be melted down into the universal man who proclaimed his loyalty to all mankind and severed his ties with his original ethnic and religious group.

All this Rabbi Fleischer understood, and for a dozen years or so he did not, from the pulpit, go beyond the limits of Reform Judaism or the Unitarianism upon which, in Boston, it had been modeled. Like other liberal clergymen, he accepted Charles Darwin and the Social Gospel, and urged the progressive improvement of society. With Whitman and Emerson he spoke of the American mission to democratize the world, and also of the contribution of America's immigrant groups to the New World culture that was in the making. A cultural pluralist before the term was coined, he preached that his people could be Americans and Jews at the same time, provided they were also humanists and humanitarians.

The Jews, according to Fleischer, were a religious group, not a nation. Sharing this view with all Reform rabbis of the day, he immediately affiliated his house of worship with the liberal Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and adopted the Union Prayer Book—the standard liturgy for Reform synagogues. When Zionist leaders attempted to recruit followers in Boston, Fleischer insisted that Jewish nationalism had died nearly two thousand years ago: "We Jews in America are not Jews, but Americans in nationality." He urged Jews who found Europe intolerable to emigrate to America, not to agitate for either Uganda or Palestine. In the New World "sheer humanism—the progressive application of moral ideals to all phases of human relationship—will . . . win their battles [and] . . . the Jews' voice [will] . . . mingle with the chorus. . . ."

This "chorus" consisted of the diverse groups that had emigrated to these shores. Lecturing to a Congregationalist men's club, Fleischer, with an acknowledgment to Emerson, said that "the strength of a community . . . is measured by the . . . variety . . . of . . . types," and that America should therefore encourage the plurality of immigrant cultures. If, on the other hand, the immigrants and their descendants became exactly like older Americans, the nation would turn into an "English colony . . . an outpost of Anglo-Saxon civilization." As Emerson foresaw, Fleischer continued, the New World, because of its heterogeneous population, would ultimately create a society unlike any from which America's immigrants had come in the Old World. The Jews, too, would "enrich our land with spiritual wealth," and they had "a worthy reason for their differences. . . ."

THE new temple building (1906) embodied Rabbi Fleischer's idea that the Jew must retain his religious identity in order to contribute to American culture. The style was neither Georgian nor neo-Classical; the synagogue was easily distinguishable from a chaste New England church. Nor was it done in the then fashionable style that drew its model from Romanesque France or Renaissance Italy. The motif was Middle Eastern, to symbolize "the religion which has come to us from the most ancient time." The central dome stood for the Hebrew belief in a single God, and the seven windows on each side represented the Jewish idea that seven was a perfect number. The wall band purported to represent the phylactery, while the onyx Ark, the interior marble, and the two exterior pylons were facsimiles of the originals in Solomon's Temple. Yet the synagogue on Commonwealth Avenue did not only look back. The organ pipes, shaped like trumpets—the symbols of victory—spoke for "the confident world-outlook of the Jewish faith." The inscription, "Dedicated to the Brotherhood of Man. Consecrated to the Fatherhood of God," embodied the humanism and humanitarianism of Boston's Reform Jews.

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From the pulpit, Rabbi Fleischer constantly spoke of the need that Judaism be the religion of humanity. In practice this meant that Temple Israel must combat social evil. Thus Rabbi Fleischer inveighed against the "imperialists" of 1899. Where France had violated its belief in fraternity by persecuting Dreyfus, so America, in coercing Filipinos, "is doomed to fail in its larger mission . . . to assure the success of democracy." During the election of 1904, the rabbi, in a sermon delivered on Yom Kippur, declared that Theodore Roosevelt, who unrighteously glorified war and conquest, would if elected President betray America's principles. He attacked the advocates of restricted immigration and the high-tariff men; with the son of William Lloyd Garrison, he appeared before the General Court of Massachusetts to argue for the abolition of capital punishment. He crusaded for equal rights for women and, in a still prudish day, championed planned parenthood. (Like the scientists of the day, Rabbi Fleischer believed "people must be properly mated from the point of view of eugenics before they are allowed to enter matrimony.")

He urged the planning of cities and declared his attachment to municipal socialism. By 1908, Rabbi Fleischer had forgiven the bully of San Juan Hill and hailed him as a modern Isaiah: "It is just as much a holy work for Mr. Roosevelt to say Thou shalt not to malefactors of great wealth as for any prophet . . . in Palestine." In short, believing that a "congregation can be . . . worth while only if it concerns itself with the whole range of human relations," Rabbi Fleischer made Temple Israel into a civic forum. To the synagogue he brought fellow reformers as guest lecturers: Thomas Wentworth Higginson and Edwin D. Mead, Charles H. Dole and Charles Ames, Julia Ward Howe and Alice Stone Blackwell, Robert A. Woods and Meyer Bloomfield, variously known as advocates of such bold, new, progressive causes as world peace, municipal socialism, city planning, settlement houses, equal rights for women, and free thought.

But more significant for his relation to Judaism was the development of his general ideas on religion, which generally found expression away from the pulpit. By his own admission, his "patron saint" was Emerson. The rabbi's library (kept intact by his wife in New York) reveals that he read and reread the works of the Concord philosopher, heavily annotating them. In his dog-eared copy of Emerson's *Nature,* the following is underlined: "Why should we not also enjoy an original relation to the universe?" It is not known just when the rabbi read *Nature,* but as early as 1896, at Greenacre, he had written:

Take this message to heart:
All,—of God is a part.

Again at Greenacre, he seemed to write like a "transparent eyeball":

Omnipresence! Omnipresence!
Manifest Thyself in me!
Omnipresence! Omnipresence!
Manifest Thyself in Me!

Taking a pantheistic position, Fleischer rejected not only Jehovah, but Schindler's concept of God as clockmaker and First Cause.

Disapproving of the God of his fathers, Fleischer, by 1902, was intimating that there was a religion other than Judaism to which he was devoted. He chose to disclose his opinion in the *Arena,* the outspoken advocate of newness. "We of America," he wrote, echoing Whitman and Emerson, "are . . . the 'peculiar people' consecrated to that . . . 'mission' of realizing Democracy [which] is potentially a universal spiritual principle, aye, a religion. . . ." He "would have men like Washington, Samuel Adams, Jefferson, Lincoln . . . John Brown (. . . the spiritual soldiers of democracy) . . . placed literally in a calendar of saints . . . to be reverenced by our future Americans as apostles of our Republic." Faith in these democratic demigods would give the nation's diverse immigrant stocks a single heritage that would melt them down into a single new people.

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The *Arena* article, as well as another in the following year, did not go beyond saying that the schools must teach democracy. In 1905, however, Rabbi Fleischer asserted that the synagogues and churches were outmoded, and that a new church, too, must preach the democratic faith. Save for the Roman Catholics, most people, he declared, were dissatisfied with their denominations, as evidenced by the falling off of attendance. The church and the synagogue were becoming "feminized," and the unethical practices of disreputable businessmen revealed that religion in America was one thing on Sunday and another on Monday. We need, Fleischer wrote, a religion that will talk less of God and more of good, a new prophet like "Jesus, Isaiah . . . [who] will talk . . . about the sort of man that the individual must be in himself and in his social relations. . . ." The sanction for ethics must rest on man's reason, not his fear of God's punishment. Fleischer's conclusion, borrowed from Emerson, was that America, forging a new people out of its many ethnic groups, would create the new faith; and that, as greater intercourse developed among nations, the American creed would spread throughout the world, and bring about the perfecting of human society.

Until 1907, the Jewish clergyman and his congregation differed from Unitarians and liberal Congregationalists in two respects chiefly: they neither worshipped on Sunday nor accepted Jesus as part of their heritage. These two differences were removed after the consecration of the new temple building in 1906. In that year Sunday services were adopted; and one year later Rabbi Fleischer, speaking from his pulpit during the Christmas week, preached that while Jews could not regard Jesus as the miraculously begotten son of God, they must embrace him as the greatest of all Jewish prophets. Jesus had understood God's message that the human race was one, that we must all love one another. "Jews and Christians," Fleischer observed, "will be reconciled and reunited, largely through Jesus, in love of God and service by man."

Shortly thereafter the rabbi agreed to exchange pulpits with the Reverend Dr. George A. Gordon of the Old South Congregational Church and the Reverend Dr. Thomas Van Ness of the Second Church. That Fleischer and Van Ness should exchange pulpits was no surprise, for the latter was a Unitarian. Dr. Gordon, however, was a Congregationalist and, while championing Progressive Orthodoxy, was the leading Trinitarian Christian in Boston. To his orthodox critics, Gordon retorted: "Jesus was a Jew, the sovereign Jew, and gave himself in life and death for his people. I infer from this fact that he would not be displeased by an act of respect done to his people by a minister of the Gospel." When Fleischer addressed Dr. Gordon's congregation, he did so, as he put it, as a "fellow-Jew of Jesus," to emphasize the latter's "supreme injunctions to love God and to love man . . . the sublimated spiritual commonsense of mankind."

Speaking from pulpits once occupied by Cotton Mather and Ralph Waldo Emerson, lecturing with great success in all the New England towns that looked to Boston for culture, Fleischer no longer felt any strong tie to Judaism. By 1908 he expressed his desire to terminate his contract with Temple Israel, and stayed on only when given *carte blanche*.

Knowing now that he would not long remain in Judaism, he expressed his advanced views more often, and from the pulpit as well as away from it. Thus he declared to his congregation that Jews were already of mixed blood, and that they must further intermarry with the other peoples of America to build the "new nation . . . to emerge from the melting pot." "Obviously," he concluded, "such fusion means annihilation of identity." At a union Thanksgiving service at the Second Church, where his congregation had joined Dr. Van Ness's for the occasion, he declared that, while it was a sign of a larger fraternal spirit for "liberal Jews and Unitarians [to] come together," a "formal union" of all progressive religions would be more in keeping with the democratic creed of per-

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manently abolishing all parochial barriers.

When President Eliot of Harvard in 1909 published his views on the need for a new religion similar to Fleischer's (in a letter to Fleischer, Eliot acknowledged the kinship), Temple Israel's rabbi defended the Harvard scholar against his orthodox critics. "I assent," he stated, "to Dr. Eliot's . . . creed which reverences truth . . . science . . . the individual . . . social service." At the Theodore Parker Centenary (1910) Fleischer announced his desire to "promote the cause of free religion to which [Parker] was consecrated"; Judaism and Christianity, Mohammedanism and Buddhism—all chapters in the history of religion—must be effaced for the "free and natural religion" of democracy.

The climax came dramatically in 1911, when Solomon Schindler, Rabbi Emeritus, who had started the revolution at Temple Israel in the 1870's, appeared before his congregation to preach on "Mistakes I Have Made." Reconverted in old age to the faith of his fathers, the one-time radical hoped to start a general return to a Judaism more like that before the advent of Reform. His chief mistake, Schindler exclaimed, had been to try to make "the Jew like the Gentile." That had failed; "the Jew will never succumb . . . to the melting pot." American Jews must form their own communities, as the God of the Hebrews commanded. They must also return to old forms, accept a uniform creed, pay less attention to reason and more to emotion. Parker, Spencer, Huxley, Wallace, Darwin, Ingersoll—these men, Schindler said, had betrayed him into believing that the Jews should give up their peoplehood for universalism.

Shortly thereafter Fleischer, who was now ready to resign his pulpit, answered Schindler in a sermon, "Some Seeming Mistakes Which I Have Gladly Made." The younger man did not wish to make the Jew like the Gentile; he hoped to fuse *all* Americans into a *new* people. Schindler, he said, was narrow-minded in refusing to surrender a distinctive Judaism in order to foster "the union of the human family on an increasingly inclusive basis." Defiantly, Fleischer concluded: "I have gladly made the seeming mistake of encouraging assimilation. . . ."

Temple Israel chose neither the reaction of Schindler nor the radicalism of Fleischer. When the latter's contract terminated in 1911, they engaged Rabbi Harry Levi, a moderate, whose views were those of the Fleischer of 1900—those of Reform Judaism. In taking leave of his congregation, Fleischer declared that he was giving up the husk of Judaism for the core of free religion: for a transcendental God, for science, progress, and the love that "draws man to man" and "rises above and beyond the barriers of nation, creed, or color." Thereafter he would worship Man, whose boundless goodness would create a society as yet undreamt "by the most visionary . . . of utopians." After seventeen years in the Jewish pulpit, during half of which he had said one thing to Jews and another to Gentiles, Charles Fleischer was relieved to proclaim: "I am henceforth beyond . . . sectarianism. At last, the world is mine, and I am the world's."

On January 2, 1912, Charles Fleischer released the following to the Boston News bureau: "America needs and deserves its own particular type of religion—a practical idealism which will glorify the life of our day, and pass on a better spiritual heritage to the American generations still to come." Sunday afternoon, January 7, the Sunday Commons held its first service at the Majestic Theater.

Central to the thought of the Commoners was the belief that Judaism and Christianity were not adequate for America because they had originated in an ancient time and in a far-off place. What was the Bible, asked Fleischer, if not the ideals and the idolization of Hebrew folk heroes? America had its own heroes, "Lincoln, Emerson, Whitman, Parker . . . Jefferson, Paine, and Franklin." It also had its own holy scriptures, the Declaration of Independence, *Common Sense, Leaves of Grass, Nature, The Permanent and Transient in Religion,* the Emancipation Proclamation. Since more than one-half of

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the American people was unchurched, Fleischer asked, and since the age demanded ethical thinking on social problems, should not the Americans, a new people, attack these social problems in the moral spirit of *their* saints, and in a new church?

On the surface, the Sunday Commons seemed to be an adventure in secularism. Charles Fleischer was not called "Reverend," "Father," or "Rabbi"; he was simply "Leader." He published a bi-weekly, *Democracy*, and a slim volume entitled *American Aspirations*, but he did not attempt a new theology, as had the Christian Scientists and Theosophists. Distrustful of all theologies, his motto was: "Face Facts and Proceed." Like parishioners in other churches, the men and women who attended Sunday services at the Commons sang hymns; but these hymns were patriotic songs. The text for the Leader's addresses came from current events, from a divorce, a heroic act, the death of a robber baron, Cardinal O'Connel's denunciation of socialism, the Lawrence strike, war. There was no Bible reading, and no prayers. On occasions, Fleischer invited one social reformer or another to occupy the rostrum.

Yet, at bottom, the Sunday Commons was still more spiritual than secular—at least as Commoners understood these terms. Fleischer and his followers wished to dignify the national life by living the *values* American society cherished, as once the ancient Hebrews had lived their values. Thus the Leader championed the cause of trade unionism not so much out of the desire to see workers well off materially, as in the hope that labor organizations would democratize American life by equalizing it. Although he supported America's entry into World War I, he opposed war in general, again not so much because it brought suffering, but because it violated the sacredness of the individual. In attacking the trusts, he spoke less of restoring competition than of imbuing the great capitalists with the desire to serve fellow Americans. And in his arguments for Negro rights, the call for equal opportunity in housing, education, and employment was emphasized less than his assertions that white Americans could not be real Americans until Negroes were granted their own human dignity. "Democracy," he said, "demands such mutual respect as makes of intolerance a vice, and even of tolerance only a veiled insult." Fleischer had one idea, to be found in every lecture: "The only solution for the human race is in the re-discovery of our spirituality; in the practical use of our spirituality; in taking spirituality out of . . . metaphysics. . . ."

During the first years of Sunday Commons as many as 1,700 people attended services, an unusually high figure for a day characterized by religious indifference and poor church attendance. Believers in the melting pot, these "worshippers" came from diverse ethnic stocks and religious backgrounds. A few of them intermarried. Roland Hayes, then a young tenor, sang at the Commons; of four ushers, Fleischer boasted, there was "an Armenian, a Hungarian Jew, a pre-Revolutionary Yankee, and a Scotchman." One of the financial angels was Tom Lawson of *Frenzied Finance*, the muckraker of Wall Street.

The Commoners came not only to listen to "a well-informed, well-read, erudite, and independent person think aloud on the important subjects of the day," but, after the address, "to stand with bowed head" to an "aspiration." The "aspirations" were a substitute for prayer, for if man had the divine spirit in him, there was no need to pray to a deity outside the universe. Rather one must express the longing for the "Better which brings the inspiration of the Best."

"Let us stand," Fleischer said, "wholehearted before the universe and consecrate ourselves to the greatness and splendor of Man. We believe that Man is God, that in Man hope and faith are innate and not bestowed. . . . Let us glorify our nation. . . . Man is the creator of creeds, of parties, of peoples. These He [*sic*] has made, and what He has made He has the right to unmake and the duty to improve."

IN HIS twenty-ninth year Charles Fleischer said to a Boston audience in Parker

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Memorial Hall: "I thank God that I have not been born an American, so that I might have a chance to achieve my Americanism." An immigrant, he discovered the historic meaning of the land of his adoption in the philosophy of American liberalism. Emerson, in particular, gave him the idea that the New World was really new, and that Americans, as individuals and as a people, must consecrate themselves to building a society that would assure every member of it a measure of human dignity. As a rabbi, Fleischer sought to enable a recent immigrant group, with its descendants, to assimilate the values America lived by. He failed to win his people to universalism because they believed, as he himself had earlier, that the country was strengthened by the plurality of its cultures. Nor could they as second-generation Americans obliterate a heritage that was so close to them.

They would have agreed with the remark of Henry James's Eugenia in *The Europeans*: "One's reason is dismally flat, it's a bed with the mattress removed." Fleischer's rational religion was for them dismally flat with the Judaism removed. But the Sunday Commons was not entirely a religion of reason. It was grounded in the sentiment of men and women of intense good will who were strenuously devoted to expanding the meaning of democracy. And behind the sentiment lay faith—the faith of an entire reforming generation in the melting pot and the sacredness of the individual, in the mission of America to perfect mankind.

Such faith and sentiment withered in the 1920's. F. Scott Fitzgerald declared for a disillusioned generation that he found "all Gods dead . . . all faiths in man shaken." The faith that died hardest was the faith that underlay all the faiths of Fleischer and his liberal contemporaries: that America would create a civilization that would make life meaningful for the nation and for the individual. As Malcolm Cowley has written: "'They do things better in Europe: let's go there' became the slogan of the intellectual classes." Today even this slogan is dated.

But the dilemma that led Fleischer out of Judaism remains. His problem was not one of reconciling tradition and innovation, or reason and emotion. Rather he came to believe that sectarian worship controverted universal values. Actually, he meant American, not universal. Here we have it. Since the Enlightenment, the passion for social justice has so permeated religious life in America that the uncompromising modernist often has regarded denominational divisions as arbitrary, even divisive. When ethnic allegiance—the axis of denominationalism in America—breaks, the modernist is likely to leave the ancestral religion for another, or for a non-sectarian congregation, or for his own private humanism.

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DOES OUR SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM MAKE SENSE?

Insurance, Relief, or What?

DILLARD STOKES

THE true nature of Social Security in our country is almost unknown to the taxpayers who maintain and rely on it. After twenty years, "Social Security" is in the language, but these words connote its purpose and assumed benefits rather than the vast politico-economic complex depended upon to realize them. The aims of Social Security are admirable. Most of the results evident *to date* are good. So, by association, these virtues are imputed to the system itself.

Both Democrats and Republicans extol this sacred cow for the milk it gives, but they do not audit its feed bill or mention the possibility of its going dry. Politicians in both parties trade on colossal outlays for today and munificent promises for tomorrow. Can the promises possibly be honored? What will they really cost? And who, really, is going to pay for them in the long run? These very relevant political considerations languish for want of attention. But they do not die; they only bide their time.

The sole changes seriously being proposed today in Social Security are for the extension of its "coverage" to more people—usually in blocks of several millions—and for the raising of payments to all beneficiaries, either forthrightly or by easing the curbs now in force. That is the substance of the Eisenhower program now before Congress. It was the substance of the program recommended by Presidents Truman and Roosevelt. These programs open the tap a little more—but the situation actually requires a thorough examination of the design and efficiency of the whole system of waterworks.

WHAT faces us here is a lapse of the political process. Since the founding of the Republic, policy on great matters has been *hammered out through conflicts of interest*. Hard-money pressure opposed soft-credit pressure. High-tariff pressure opposed cheap-goods pressure. Each faction was a check on every other; its own interest acted as a test of the policy that prevailed, or of the compromise that was reached by balancing the pressures (the latter being the most frequent solution). This process does not function when only one side of an issue finds partisans and attracts general support, as is the case with Social Security today. The only issues taken to the people are which party, and which candidate, can promise most to most people most plausibly.

This is not because politicians are rascals but because they are politicians. It is their normal and proper response to much pressure on one side, and little or none on the other. Here on one side is the interest of six million beneficiaries, and of sixty-six million others who hope to join them. This interest is taken up by the liberal wings of both political parties, prodded by powerful lobbies like those of the AFL, the CIO, the ADA, social workers, fraternal groups, and others. These greatly outnumber and outlobby the normally conservative professional, industrial, and financial interests, many of whom are re-

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MOST Americans believe that our system of Social Security is a form of insurance which is paid for out of employee and employer contributions to a social insurance fund, and that the beneficiary (or his heirs) will eventually get back in benefits as much as he paid in in deductions. That this is not at all the case, however, is the contention of DILLARD STOKES, who warns us that we must take thought now to correct the inequities and haphazard inconsistencies of our Social Security philosophy and system, or else bequeath to future generations problems of dismaying proportions. Mr. Stokes was born in Georgia in 1907, and has worked for many newspapers, including the Washington *Post*; he received the American Newspaper Guild's Heywood Broun Award in 1942. He was special counsel to the CIO's Political Action Committee from 1948 to 1952. In January 1954 this magazine published his article "How Insure Security in Government Service."

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strained in their opposition by their hope of finding in Social Security a solution of employer-pension and disability problems.

Hence there was no steam behind the recent proposal of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States to change over to a pay-as-you-go, universal coverage pension plan. It was lost amid the attacks upon and defenses of the Social Security idea on an ideological level. There was little discussion of the merits and faults, as such, of the proposed change.

It is the burden of this article that the unanimity is very superficial and that Social Security presents real issues on which neither present nor prospective beneficiaries would be all of one mind did they know the facts. Until these are clear the political process cannot function.

A REALISTIC survey of OASI—the Federal Old Age and Survivors' Insurance plan, the programs called Social Security—must reckon with three propositions. First: the sheer size of OASI, which is the biggest permanent enterprise this government ever has undertaken, or is ever likely to undertake. Second: the public illusions about Social Security, which are clustered in such a semblance of order as to form a complete yet largely mythical system. Third: the bankruptcy of design and policy, both social and financial, that handicaps the actual system, whose function, method, and economic nature have not been clarified. The myth about Social Security veils shortcomings, but they are there, and they must be remedied before Social Security can do its job and merit its reputation.

The factor of size might be taken for granted, but it would be better to put it into perspective first. Since its establishment in 1935, Social Security has collected taxes from 106,800,000 persons. What other enterprise, public or private, ever attracted or compelled the participation of so many Americans? Not the armed forces: there are only about 20 million veterans. Not the income tax: fewer than 60 million returns are made a year. Not even making a living: the 1954 labor force amounts to somewhere around 62½ millions.

Out of a population of 161 million, about 6 million people get OASI benefits, one for each 10½ workers. Here are the OASI high- and low-cost forecasts for the year 2000, just 46 years away:

	Low Cost	*High Cost*
U. S. population*	248	216
Working force*	96	84
OASI beneficiaries*	21	25.8
As pct. of pop'n	8½%	12%
OASI reserve fund*	$128,000	Exhausted
Annual OASI cost*	$16,421	$16,437
Per productive worker	$171	$195
Productive workers per each OASI beneficiary	4.54	3.25

(*in millions)

Besides old-age pensions to be paid in the future, OASI promises workers in covered jobs protection in the nature of life insurance. After only 15 years of operation, this insurance amounts to nearly $300 billion. All life insurance of all kinds written by all the private insurance companies in the United States adds up to only $276 billion.

Private insurance is backed up by assets —mostly reserves required by law—of about $76 billion. Social Security insurance is backed by a "reserve fund" now hovering around $20 billion. After 46 years this fund will *either* have grown to $128 billion, *or* to a lesser total—*or* else it will have all been spent by 1997. The 1953 report of the Social Security trustees envisioned all three possibilities, there being no way to tell which will come to pass. As far as the expert can see, any one of the three is as likely as any other.

One does not have to be an expert to see that colossal sums of money are involved. Next to these items of $300 billion and $128 billion, let us place others drawn from the American economy. The national debt is less than $275 billion. The total assets of all American corporations are $181 billion. The total of all bank deposits is $189 billion.

An enterprise as big as Social Security, which is going to get still bigger, is sure to be a dominant factor henceforth in the American economy, as dominant as steel output, foreign trade, consumer credit, and the value of the whole wheat crop all put together.

MOST American families are insured by Social Security against the death or retirement in old age of their breadwinners. Workers pay premiums on this insurance through taxes withheld from their wages, and the employers pay equal taxes for their

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workers' benefit. Workers in covered employment thereby acquire the right to a monthly income for themselves and their families when they retire at sixty-five, or a monthly income for their wives, children, aged parents, etc., in case of death before retirement. The payments vary with the worker's earnings, and thus with the premiums paid. These OASI benefits do not depend on a "means test," as relief does, for they are not charity or relief. The workers pay substantially for what they will get, and they, or their survivors, will get substantially what they pay for. The benefits are paid out of a reserve fund built up for the purpose from premiums paid by prospective beneficiaries. Premiums now being paid by tens of millions of workers are building up the reserve fund to pay their benefits when they become entitled to them.

A familiar picture, is it not? Consider it well: it corresponds to the notion of Social Security held by a hundred million Americans. They take it for granted, they take it for fact—and they are dead wrong. *For every statement in the foregoing paragraph is demonstrably false.*

As a matter of fact, Social Security does not provide "insurance." The "contributions" are not "premiums," they are just taxes. The workers acquire no "rights," nor do their survivors. Payments to retired workers, or to surviving families—if and when paid—have little relation to the worker's earnings or to what he paid in to OASI. There is a "means test" for many, and there is an "earnings" test for everyone. Most of the money now being paid out by Social Security is relief: the people getting it did not pay for it, and millions do not get what they did pay for. The benefits do *not* come out of any "reserve fund." The trust account maintained under that name is neither a fund nor a reserve.

Insurance is a word known to nearly everybody. And so is the substance of Webster's definition, that it is "a contract whereby, for a stipulated consideration, called a premium, one party undertakes to indemnify or guarantee another against loss by a certain specified contingency or peril, called a risk, the contract being set forth in a document called a policy" (*New International Dictionary*, second edition).

The Social Security program is referred to in the law as "Old Age and Survivors' Insurance." Its revenue comes from taxes imposed by the "Federal Insurance Contributions Act." The government has published over 60 million booklets, leaflets, press releases, and other "educational material," all chock-full of words like *insurance, premium, policy,* etc.* This nomenclature has been taken up by the newspapers, magazines, and public speakers.

For this reason, the American people cannot be blamed for supposing they are buying insurance with the taxes they pay OASI, and that the other party—the government—"undertakes to indemnify or guarantee" them against loss of income due to old age and death, according to the published tables and formulas. Hardly can it be called quibbling over words to point out here that the taxes are not *buying* them insurance or anything else. For under Social Security the company—that is, the government—is bound to no obligations whatever. It can raise the premiums or the benefits, or reduce them, or cut them out, or change the conditions upon which benefits are paid, or do anything else it likes, and the policy-holder—that is, the taxpayer, the worker—has no remedy. The courts say that what he pays in is an income tax, and if he gets anything back it is a gratuity.

There are sinister stories about the fine print in insurance policies, but surely no private company was ever able to *change* the fine print at will, or to default on the policy and keep the premiums.

MANY will say that such a default would violate the moral if not the legal rights of the victims, and surely Congress never would do anything so shocking. Ah, but Congress has done so!

The Social Security Act of 1935 provided that a worker would get back not less than what he put into the system. The act provided lump-sum refunds to those who reached sixty-five without qualifying for pensions, to the estates of those who died

*Here is a sample statement, from a booklet put out in 1952 (2 million copies printed): "Your account number on your social security card identifies your old age and survivors' *insurance account*. Your card is the symbol of your *insurance policy* under the Federal Social Security law" (italics mine).

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before reaching sixty-five, and to the estates of those who began drawing pensions but died before receiving an amount equal to the value of their contributions. Under this law, refunds were made to 178,583 workers and 318,665 estates. The same "right" to get back their money belonged to the other 33 million people who paid Social Security taxes during this period but did not die or retire. Whether their "rights" were moral, legal, or both, Congress wiped them out by the act of 1939. As a result, up to the end of 1952, a total of 6,400,000 persons died without receiving pensions, lump-sum payments, refunds, or anything else. Yet they, and their employers, had paid in $725 million.

The act of 1935 assured the original 33 million OASI taxpayers "permanent" coverage by 1941. Most of these taxpayers had but two years to go when Congress passed the 1939 amendments and moved the date forward to the end of 1946.

During the 1940's the courts declared Social Security "rights" to belong to upwards of a million persons over whom there was dispute by reason of the nature of their employment. Regulations to cover them were drafted, but never took effect because in 1948 Congress took the "rights" away.

Having bought, paid for, and qualified for their Social Security incomes—as they were led to think—many persons retired to live on them and on what they could earn through non-covered work. These persons opened little shops, set up as repair men, part-time bookkeepers, dressmakers, or the like. In fine, these old people made plans for their old age on the basis of Social Security and its assurances. What they did was perfectly legal—until 1950, when Congress extended OASI coverage to the self-employed, and put a limit on their earnings. As a result, many were stripped of their OASI incomes—23,208 individuals suffered these cuts by the end of 1951. In some cases they were called on to pay back substantial sums. And to rub salt in the wound, these people were required by law to pay OASI taxes on their earnings so they would have Social Security in their "old age."

These are instances of "rights" taken away by specific act. However, OASI "rights" can vanish simply by the passage of time. There are 25 million persons who paid some taxes to OASI between 1937 and 1951, but at the end of the latter year were "uninsured." Some never paid over a period long enough to acquire protection. Many others were insured at some time but lost that status, as well as what they paid in. Another 41 million persons are "currently" insured, but may lose that status and find themselves, like the first 25 million, deprived of their right to benefits if they are out of a job too long, or work too long at jobs not under Social Security. There are 25 million who now have "permanent" insurance. They keep their "rights" regardless of where or whether they work (unless Congress takes them away). These "permanently" insured persons, however, are liable to a diminution of their benefits if they stop paying OASI taxes: the longer they have no covered earnings the less the average monthly wage credited to them.

On this average is based the retired worker's primary benefit. His monthly payment is 55 per cent of the first $100 of the average, plus 15 per cent of the next $200. Secondary benefits are fractions of the primary. The spouse and children of a retired worker each may get a monthly payment of half the primary. The surviving spouse and parents of a deceased worker may each get a monthly payment of three-fourths of the primary. Each surviving child may get between a half and three-fourths. The maximum payable on any worker's account is 80 per cent of his average monthly wage, but not more than $168.75.

What is the relationship of these benefits to what was paid in? This year a $100-a-month worker pays $4 a month—$2 himself, $2 through his employer—for a monthly primary benefit of $55. A $300-a-month worker pays $12 a month for a benefit of $85. That is 200 per cent more "premium" for only 55 per cent more "insurance." A self-employed person, for the same "insurance," pays 25 per cent less premium than one who works for somebody else. This isn't all: about 10 per cent of the 6 million persons newly covered by the 1950 amendments were able to "buy," by paying "premiums" for six quarters, the same coverage others had paid premiums on for 14 years.*

*An OASI booklet in 1951 gave the example of a $20-a-week housekeeper who can get $41 a month for life when she has paid OASI taxes for three years. (For $93.60, she gets an annuity worth about $4000.)

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WHETHER Social Security is administering a relief program is a matter of fact, not of words.* As distinguished from bought and paid-for benefits widely supposed to come from Social Security, *relief* is aid given by a public agency to needy persons who have not paid for it. Payments based on a substantial consideration are not relief just because somebody calls them that. A gratuity is no less relief because it is called something else, or because of a token consideration that, in fact, does not pay for it.

A Social Security report shows $15 billion in annuities will be paid present old-age beneficiaries, their spouses and children. The actual cost of these annuities is not less than $9 or $10 billion, yet these beneficiaries paid only $711,480,000 for them. (We disregard the "insurance" protection enjoyed by the primary beneficiaries for periods up to 13 years, the value of which was several times the $711 million they paid in; here we treat the sum of $711 million as though it were paid for the annuities alone.) These people, then, are going to draw over $14 billion more than they paid in. These $14 billion were clearly *not* paid for: what does this sum go for then, if not old-age relief? The point is not made to blame the old people's getting the aid. Many of them need it, and a wise economy will give it to them. But these considerations do not justify pretending the $14 billion came out of a "reserve fund" built up by the beneficiaries. Nor do they justify camouflaging the fact that the money really comes out of "premiums" currently being paid in by workers who are led to believe that *their* money is being saved up for *their* benefit.

Granted that this $14 billion ought to be paid out and that, like all wise relief, it promotes the general welfare. Under our theory of government, funds for this purpose ought to come—and otherwise do come—out of the general funds raised by taxes levied according to ability to pay. The fiction that these OASI payments are something other than relief conceals what is going on. *That is, this charge for the general welfare is being exacted from one class of taxpayers, the wage earners.* And the whole burden falls on the poorest of these, for OASI taxes only the first $3600 of annual earnings.

Public relief and private charity have long been denied to those having other means of subsistence, but Social Security is generally believed to eliminate this supposedly humiliating condition. As an OASI booklet puts it: "This is an *insurance* program. [Participants] may qualify for benefits without regard to their financial resources, such as savings, property, or other insurance" (italics theirs). Quite so. A millionaire can draw the same OASI income for himself and his family that a janitor can. Neither must pass a "means test." But if the janitor's "means" include $76 a month paid him for mowing lawns, he will lose his Social Security payments for that month. So will his wife and children. The payments to 340,508 persons were cut off, under this regulation, at the end of 1952.

Also, widowers, surviving parents, and, in some cases, children, must prove "actual dependency" on the primary beneficiary. In view of all this, the assertion that Social Security does not now use a "means test" rests on some pretty refined hairsplitting.

THERE is on the books of the Treasury an OASI trust account of nearly $20 billion which will increase by more than $2 billion this year. The account is part of the public debt, and draws interest at about 2¼ per cent. How then can one say there is no Social Security "reserve fund"?

Suppose there were no account, and from year to year OASI paid its costs out of appropriations voted for the purpose. If a year came when outgo was more than the appropriation, what could be done? There are four answers: (1) a portion of the Social Security benefits for that year would not be paid; (2) the government would borrow the necessary funds and make them available to Social Security; (3) Congress would raise taxes to get the money; or (4) the funds would be diverted from some other use by cutting the budget of some other agency.

The same four courses—and no others—would be open to meet an OASI deficit under

*The reference, of course, is to OASI alone, not to Old Age Assistance, Aid to Dependent Children, Aid to the Needy Blind, or Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled. These federal programs, though handled by Social Security, are set up by Congress as relief, and paid for as such out of separate funds appropriated out of the general funds of the Treasury. In the year ending June 30, 1954, they cost the federal treasury $1,340,000,000, or about $2 per month per taxpayer.

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the "reserve fund" as it is now constituted.

There is no money in this "reserve fund" either as cash, or as a credit like a bank deposit on which checks could be drawn. There are vast evidences of federal debt, but these are not "bonds" in a familiar or negotiable form. This is not to say that the "reserve" is worthless—it is as good as the credit of the United States—but it does not exist as a "fund" ready and available when needed. When OASI calls on it the Treasury must find the money, if it is able and Congress is willing. To make good on the "reserve fund" would require the same operations as to meet a deficit. As an economic fact there is no "reserve fund" (as the term has been used and understood up to now).

Private insurance companies have put many billions of their reserves (but seldom over 20 per cent of the total) into government bonds. But they are not on the same footing as OASI, which invests in nothing else. First, the reason for drawing on the reserves. Private companies get most of their revenue from premiums. A sharp drop in these would reduce their liabilities. But a drop in OASI revenue would mean no such relief from liability. On the contrary, the same factors that caused the loss probably would bring more claims for benefits. When OASI runs into a deficit it probably will not be due to revenue loss at all, but to increased demands. Second, if the private companies met their needs wholly out of their government bonds, whether these were sold, pledged, or cashed in, there would be no resultant rise in government paper held by the public, or in taxes, and no reduction of federal spending. One or more of these would be sure to follow an OASI deficit, with considerable impact on the nation's whole economy.

The foregoing passages have touched on some but by no means all of the popular illusions about Social Security. Most of these probably grew out of confused policy and lack of basic principles. Both these confusions and lacks are in the Social Security Act itself. The blame belongs to Congress, not the administrators. They err in emphasizing insurance, premiums, "rights," and so forth, but even here they can plead that the terms came from Congress and they just make the most of them.

THE conditions of eligibility common to all Social Security benefits are (1) filing application; (2) adequate covered employment of the "primary" worker; (3) absence of other OASI benefits of equal or greater value; and (4) that the beneficiary not earn over $75 a month in covered employment. The first requirement calls for no comment, except that it is hard to see why it was written into the very law. The second is certainly natural and reasonable: it goes to the foundation of eligibility. The third belongs in a relief or charity program: what is it doing, therefore, in an "insurance" system? (If one is able to claim two or more benefits it can only be because he, or somebody else, bought and paid for them. So why should he not have them? The answer is that OASI simply is not an "insurance" system except in name.) The fourth condition is the daily instrument of many discriminations.

Besides these there are a host of conditions which vary from one class of beneficiaries to another and out of which it is impossible to make any logical pattern. Some are so whimsical and arbitrary that whether a person gets, or keeps, "current payment status" might as well depend on drawing numbers out of a hat. The inevitable result is more discriminations; some favor the rich over the poor, others the poor over the rich. Each touches only a handful of people, but those affected are wholly affected. And handfuls add up.

Consider the covered-earnings requirement: a wage earner (as well as his wife and children) loses his OASI payment for any month in which he makes over $75. But the limit for a self-employed person is not $75 a month but $900 a year. He can make over $75 in 11 months out of 12 without losing a dime of OASI benefit.* Those who find employment outside OASI coverage, as in public agencies, tax-exempt institutions, and the like, are freed from this condition altogether. So are 25,000 beneficiaries in foreign countries. Raising the limit will not erase this flaw; the discriminations will still be there.

To survey all the ifs and maybes that harass any one category of secondary beneficiaries would take another article as long as this one. But let us look at one or two of them in practice.

*The self-employed beneficiary can earn $81 a month for 11 months in a row, and still be within the $900 annual maximum.

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Age: a retired worker must be sixty-five to be paid. What about his wife? She, too, must be sixty-five years old, no matter how long they have been married, no matter whether she ever has worked, or is able to work now. The fact is that most husbands are older than their wives; the average is nearly four years. And that tells why in 1952, 1,440,000 persons over sixty-five had a "right" to OASI benefits but were not drawing them. It goes far, too, to explain why the average retirement is not sixty-five, but over sixty-eight.

The OASI rule, however, is different if the wife under sixty-five has a child under eighteen. In that case she and the child can each draw a benefit equal to half that of the retired husband. No widow, however needy, can draw a benefit until she is sixty-five, unless she has a child. If she has, she collects, no matter how well off she is. Yet all these husbands paid taxes to OASI at the same rate for—as they thought—the same security for their wives.

Dependency: this is not a condition for payment of benefits to a child, or to a wife or widow over sixty-five, or to the mother of a child under eighteen, whatever her age. But the husband or widower of a woman worker must establish his actual dependency. What is more, in his case it is not enough that the wife be "permanently insured" under OASI. She must, in addition, have worked during half of the three years just before her death or retirement. Moreover, the husband's dependency must exist at the time of the retirement or death. If a husband suffers a breakdown or loses his job the week after the wife retires or dies, there is no OASI protection for him, no matter how much his wife paid in "premiums." In such a case, a retired woman *might* be able to qualify her husband by going back to work. But if she died, Social Security would simply keep what she had paid in and leave the widower to shift for himself.

The point advanced here is not that any of these rules are wrong in and of themselves, but that they are a hodgepodge, and follow no rationale. The earnings of some are limited, of others not; some must be sixty-five, others not; some must be actual dependents of the primary, others not. The "rights" of the beneficiaries depend on time, chance, and statutory caprice to a degree that would provoke just criticism of a charity program and is intolerable in a system of "insurance" the worker buys and pays for.

THE chaos just indicated came about with the shift, in 1939, from paid-for pensions to gratuities, without acknowledgment of the fact either by Congress or by the advocates and apologists of Social Security. The same act of 1939 not only modified the social policy being carried out, but altered the economic nature of the system without the necessary corresponding alteration of its governing principles. From this arises the public illusion that Social Security is guided by concepts that in fact were long ago abandoned. No others having been adopted in their stead, the system today has no basic controlling economic principle.

Because the picture in the public mind is that of the original system set up in 1935, otherwise sensible people are heard debating *whether* OASI shall be put on a pay-as-you-go basis—which is about the same as arguing whether we shall have rain yesterday. OASI already *is* on that basis.

The 1935 act did contemplate a reserve adequate to meet the probable liability. Within four years the political process broke down. Under overwhelming pressures to "give more," Congress in 1939 greatly increased the benefits without doing anything to amass reserves to pay them. On the contrary, Congress kept down the accumulation originally provided for, by holding OASI taxes at 2 per cent (half from the worker, half from the employer) until 1950. New increases in benefits, both in number and amount, were voted in 1950 and 1952 without corresponding provision for reserves. More are scheduled to be voted this year.

The result is that today the dollar amount of the OASI "reserve fund" is not quite enough to pay benefits due to those already on the rolls. There is nothing—not a dime—to pay the benefits that will become due to the 25 million "permanently" insured persons whose taxes built up the greater part of the present fund. Nor is there any money on hand to pay the benefits that will become due to most of the 41 million persons "currently" insured, or the 10 million to whom the Eisenhower administration proposes to extend coverage. From this, it does *not* follow that any of these benefits will go unpaid if and when they are due. But it implacably

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does follow that, if they are paid, the money will come from taxes yet to be collected, on wages yet to be earned, the wages of children still in school, of children yet unborn. What more does it take to make Social Security today a pay-as-you-go system?

SOCIAL SECURITY began with economic and social foundations that inspired reasonable faith in its commitments. Those foundations having been abandoned, tremendous commitments have been and continue to be added pursuant to social policies not declared, or even formulated, and pursuant to no economic theory. There is danger of these uncontrolled commitments mounting to a total of billions beyond the capacity of even this country to honor.

This calls for a survey of Social Security from the ground up. First the facts, to cull the untruths and make the half-truths whole. Then the social philosophy, to resolve whether current practice actually is carrying out the generally accepted purpose. And finally the economic basis, to assure accomplishment of what is undertaken.

The plight of the needy aged did not grow out of the last depression, but arose during the course of a century and a half at about the same rate as the United States grew away from the land. The new urban and industrial economy produced every year an increasing number of old people upon whom no realist could impose the pioneer tradition of providing for one's own wants, one's own family, and one's own old age. The depression did bring an era of climax. To those who had made no provision for their own old age were added millions who had, but had now lost their means, or their employment, or both. Beyond immediate relief for all, there was great pressure for a permanent program. Much of this opinion was based on the assumption that under modern conditions most people *cannot* provide for their own future, a premise manifestly too broad, since millions no better off than the others could and did, can and do. The most that is sure is that some cannot and many do not, and they make up the problem of the needy aged.

Congress in 1935 did not go along with this unsound assumption; it did, however, undertake to enforce old-age saving by all, the thrifty as well as the unthrifty. (For the needy who remained, a relief program, Old Age Assistance, was set up, which was supposed to diminish and disappear as Social Security matures.*) The essential social policy of the original plan called for the beneficiaries' getting, not charity, but only what they paid for. In fact, there was a guarantee that every worker, or his heirs, would get his money back. With a relatively modest reserve maximum of $46 billion, the plan was very near to being soundly self-maintaining. Except for those who were on relief, and who thus were outside the Social Security system, nobody was going to support anybody else.

We have seen that since 1939 this no longer is so, and a basic question arises: does the United States wish to continue a system under which every 3¼ (or perhaps 4½) productive workers will be required by law to maintain one OASI beneficiary—a stranger to them—in addition to their own families? A system that makes from 21 to 26 million persons pensioners of the federal government? Leaving Social Security as it is now would amount to an affirmative answer. If the answer is no, some of the present promises of OASI benefits will have to be withdrawn, and a statement of social purpose drafted on realistic lines. Indeed, this must be done in any case. For the *ideal* cannot be made *fact* until it is clear what the ideal is, and this requires more than a passion for giving more to more people.

DOES the nation wish to support all old people? All old people who retire? All old people without other means? And in each of these cases, their dependents? Actual or nominal? With, or without, regard to *their* means? Does the nation desire to support all widows and orphans? Or only needy ones? Or none at all?

Shall the support be at a flat rate? By some equally arbitrary formula? Or based on previous earnings? Even continuing the present Social Security plan requires answers to these questions if the present mare's nest of whimsical conditions is to be cleaned up.

Shall the needy be given relief, and others brought into a system in which they pay for what they get, and get what they pay for? In

*OAA, however, is still here. The federal cost rose from $244 million in 1937 to $917 million in 1954.

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that case, shall the plan be voluntary, or compulsory and universal?

These questions are not raised frivolously. The answers established by Congress in 1935 are no longer valid, for they were abandoned in 1939. The answers that took their place are not valid, for they express no policy and form only a permanent program of whimsical give-aways. They were not the product of the normal American governmental process but the response of Congress to the pressures of one bloc of interests. Because of the fiction that Social Security could give a great deal to everybody, at little or no cost to anybody, no adverse interest was evident. So none was spoken for either by the Democrats or the Republicans. Social Security has drifted too long without a course; it is time to chart one and see that it is followed.

ONCE the purpose and policy of Social Security are established, they require an economic structure. Here there is room only to notice the courses available if Social Security is kept more or less in its present form: (1) The reserve structure could be restored. (2) As many participants as possible could be brought into a reserve system, with those who could not (that is, all the present and many potential beneficiaries) shifted to another, where the government frankly paid the cost. (3) The present system could be placed on a pay-as-you-go basis, with the reserve theory altogether abandoned.

The first course would require the government to add to the reserves a new bond, and OASI taxes would have to be raised to a rate that would maintain the reserve at an adequate level. The bond would have to be about $125 billion, which would establish the public debt at $400 billion. This amount ought not to horrify anybody who is not horrified right now. It would not be a new debt, but merely posting the books to show a debt Congress already has assumed. At least $125 billion, plus its interest, must be collected in taxes to honor the commitments already made under the Social Security program. The only way to cut the total is to cut OASI payments, or to pay them to fewer people than is promised at present. In short, to withdraw some of these commitments.

Under the second course, if future beneficiaries paid their own way, the government might get off for not much more than the $22 billion committed to those now on the rolls. The saving would be a mirage as far as the whole economy is concerned, for Social Security must withdraw from it, in taxes of some kind, whatever is going to be paid out. But the people who paid the taxes would get the benefits, and vice versa.

Both the foregoing solutions share one serious weakness: the reserves would be built up in dollars, to pay benefits at fixed dollar rates. But let prices go on up, and the benefits would have to go up with them, and against that event the new "adequate" reserve will no more be adequate than the present one.

The third course accepts the cost of Social Security as a year-to-year charge on the economy and proposes to meet it from year to year. It is free of the vice of collecting more in any one year than is needed, as a reserve plan does, including the fictitious one now in effect, which takes an excess of more than $2 billion a year, yet otherwise is a true pay-as-you-go operation. It is open to the criticism that—if benefits continue on the present basis—payments will be much larger a few years from now, with a consequent steep rise in cost. That is true. But the same is true, and perhaps more so, of all reserve plans. In the years to come, if the reserve is not drawn on, it will be because OASI taxes are high enough to carry the cost. If the reserves *are* drawn upon, the money will have to be raised, as has been noted, just as though there were no reserve. In fine, no matter which scheme is adopted, the present Social Security program is being handed down to our posterity with the memo: "We promise. You pay."

There are too many of these memos on file for children now growing up and for their children who come after them. Unless the processes of government are used by this generation to bring OASI into line with reality, they are sure to be used by the next generation to repudiate its burdens. There is no necessity to ordain such an outcome. The Americans of this day, of this decade, once having faced the facts, can resolve their purposes, and build a Social Security that is equitable, adequate, and economically viable.

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MY THREE ESTHERS

The Maid Problem, as It Looks in Jerusalem

JUDY SHEPARD

SINCE my husband and I returned to Jerusalem from the United States after an absence of two years, we have had three housemaids named Esther. We have also had one Abigail, two Saras, a Margalit, and a Zora, but the Esthers lasted longer individually and one of them is still on tap to tide our household over each time a Sara or a Zora deserts us. We are, as a matter of fact, in just such a period at this writing, with Esther "Witch," an expression of martyrdom on her thin face, doggedly pushing furniture around; the most recent Sara left us last week following my discovery that she never moved furniture, only skirted it.

Esther Witch is not herself a witch, nor has she ever been one. She has, however, lived out almost half of her twenty-eight years under the evil influence of witches; as the number of Esthers mounted, we found it necessary to distinguish her from Esther "Mammy Yokum" and "Poor" Esther, and so we took to calling her Esther Witch in the privacy of our English conversation.

There is nothing about Esther which would indicate that any proper witch would waste time on her. She is spare, sallow, and dour, and both her guttural Arabic-accented Hebrew and her embarrassment with men betray the fact that she was born of Syrian Jewish parents and brought up in the small, almost medieval Jewish quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. But when she was fifteen, Esther Witch was round, rosy, and desirable enough to win the devotion of a man three times her age, a man who approached her parents and offered a sizable sum for Esther's hand. But Esther would have none of him. The suitor promptly betook himself to the nearest witch and, a few days after his rebuff, arrived at Esther's house with a fresh offer of marriage and a small piece of parchment on which the witch had recorded a curse of eternal spinsterdom: "Accursed shalt thou be and beautiful to no man for all the days of thy life."

Esther's parents were properly frightened, but Esther herself was adamant. The rejected suitor, twice rebuffed, proceeded according to the witch's instructions. Traveling to Tel Aviv, he walked to the seashore, burned the parchment with its curse, and scattered the ashes into the sea.

THE years passed. Esther's friends married and had children, her younger sister was married at sixteen. The young men of the quarter walked its cobbled streets with girls not so pretty as Esther, and she sat at home alone. She grew thin and silent and the color left her sharp face. Her twenty-third birthday came and still she was a maid and the Oriental community shunned her. In 1948, there was war with the Arabs and the family fled the Old City for the new town outside the walls. There, in a former Arab quarter newly settled by refugees from border areas, Esther's mother found a second witch, a fat woman who kept cats, chewed

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IN ITS drive for the normalization of Jewish life, the State of Israel has also acquired a maid problem like unto the nations—but, as one would expect, not quite like. JUDY SHEPARD, the patient housewife of this age-old domestic drama, was for a number of years a reporter for the New York *Post* and is co-author with her husband, Alvin Rosenfeld, of *Ticket to Israel*, a travel book published by Rinehart in 1952. Miss Shepard was born in West New York, New Jersey, in 1925, and attended the Walden School and the University of Wisconsin. She and her husband are at present living in Jerusalem.

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sunflower seeds, and was widely known as the possessor of the evil eye.

Esther Witch, while she is not one of these shameless flibbertigibbets with no regard for tradition, is a girl with a modern outlook. She wears lipstick, dresses in Western clothes, and is fond of movies. She was ashamed to be seen entering the house where the witch lived. She and her mother —a wizened woman whose black braids hang far below her flowered kerchief—arrived after dark and went furtively up the stairs to the unmarked door which led to the witch's room. The chamber was lit only by candles and by a small kerosene cookstove in one corner; for a moment, Esther saw the witch only as a large pyramid composed of a vast sweep of striped cloak. Then she distinguished a massive nose and a pair of heavy eyebrows over black eyes set in a face as doughy as unbaked Arab bread.

"Come," said the witch. She led the girl to the kerosene stove, on which lay a wooden-handled iron spoon. Before Esther could draw back, the witch tore open the collar of her cotton dress and pressed the red hot spoon to her breast. Esther screamed and struggled, but by the time she succeeded in wrenching herself free, the job was finished. Sobbing, Esther examined her seared flesh while her mother trembled against the wall and the witch went busily about her affairs. Bent over a table, she combined a series of small unidentifiable objects into a bit of burlap sacking, then tied the small parcel with a bit of thong. A second amulet—a tiny, barrel-shaped silver receptacle—was filled with a fine red powder and carefully hung on a silver chain.

"This," said the witch, giving the first packet to Esther's mother, "you must hang at a window which faces west toward the sea. The winds will carry its charms to the sea where the curse lies and render it powerless. The second charm Esther must wear about her neck always, for it will bring her the love of a man."

Three months later, Esther was married in great splendor to a handsome young Iraqi immigrant whose conscript-army uniform fitted beautifully. They have been married for two years now and he hasn't done a lick of work since his discharge from the army. Esther, dour as ever, supports them both with her earnings as a housemaid while he sits in Jerusalem cafés playing tric-trac—backgammon—with his friends. Around the neck of Esther hangs a silver amulet.

"I don't believe in any of that nonsense," Esther remarked during one of her few communicative moments. "I only wear this thing out of respect for my mother."

ESTHER Mammy Yokum was our first genuine Israeli maid. She was recommended to us by a fellow American who carefully explained that Esther was elderly, unworldly, thoroughly at odds with any so-called labor-saving device, and unacquainted with the idea of punctuality. Our informant was correct on all counts.

Esther Mammy Yokum was supposed to arrive at our apartment for an initial interview at nine in the morning. She got there hours late and must have stood outside for quite a while before I heard a slight scratching noise and opened the door. There stood a tiny woman with a gay, dark, delicate face and the easy, straight carriage of a charm-school graduate. There was a great deal of dignity in this skinny little figure, yet she was so elfin and so dauntlessly upright that I suddenly wanted to laugh.

"Hello," I said instead. "I thought you were coming at nine."

"Oh," said Esther in a voice as high and sweet as a small child's, "what time is it now?"

"It's about twelve," I said as sternly as I could.

"Then I'm late?" Esther asked, and at that moment I realized that our future maid-of-all-work could not tell time, could not, in fact, even grasp the import of the passage of hours. For Esther day was light and night was dark. Four in the afternoon might have been nine in the morning but for the hunger pangs she doubtless felt at work, for she would eat nothing in the homes of her employers lest her food be ritually unclean.

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It was not we who first called her Mammy Yokum. An American neighbor walked in one day and found Esther hard at work, her black pigtails almost touching the floor as she bent, barefoot and wearing a Mother Hubbard, over the tiles. Esther probably looked over one scrawny shoulder and flashed her inimitable grin—she had no top teeth at all and only two widely spaced bottom incisors—for our neighbor sped into the living room and demanded to know where in Jewish annals there had ever been a town called Dogpatch.

In actuality Esther Mammy Yokum did hail from the Middle Eastern equivalent of Dogpatch, U. S. A. She came from a particularly remote corner of Turkey which had for centuries harbored Jews whose tongue was Targum—ancient Aramaic. Twenty-four years before we met her, Esther had left Turkey with her husband, bound for Jerusalem. It took them weeks to make the trip by donkey-back, less time than that to discover that their lot in Palestine was to be little better than it had been in Turkey. They settled in Beit Yisrael, an Oriental Jewish quarter in the New City which was even then poor and overcrowded. Esther's husband went to work as a porter and Esther produced three girl children before he deserted his family.

She raised her girls alone and had little joy of them. The first two were beautiful and intelligent youngsters who went to school and learned some of the ways of the West. The youngest was handsome and mentally retarded. Since Esther Mammy Yokum first came to work for us, each has married and each marriage has come to grief. The eldest spent three years with a dipsomaniacal husband and returned home with a child in her arms and another coming. The second daughter, married to a boy who tells dirty jokes, is suing for annulment because the boy is impotent. The youngest was married at sixteen to an expansive middle-aged man who was attracted to her gay and childish stupidity; this marriage was not contracted without a good deal of misgiving on Esther's part, but she capitulated when the suitor offered a two-room apartment and a suite of flashy new furniture to his bride-to-be. A few days after the wedding, the bride returned to her mother, weeping hysterically. Both flat and furniture were only lures, rented from a friend for purposes of courtship.

It would be quite wrong to say that Esther was reconciled to the triple tragedy of her daughters' marriages. Proximity is an important factor in as small a country as Israel; a cat can look at a king and, at least in Israel, the meanest Turkish immigrant can hope for the same things for his daughters as the highest government official for his. Few in Israel hope for more than a decent place to live, a refrigerator, and a steady income. Esther, illiterate and impoverished, fully expected that her children would marry men whose earning capacity would lead eventually to a small apartment—perhaps in a housing project built by the government for veterans or by the Histadrut for union members—and that illiteracy and poverty would never be visited on their descendants. The fact that her second daughter, Shoshanna, had come full circle and was working as a housemaid was a crushing disappointment. Esther wants no more housemaids in her family.

Lately, perhaps because of the failure of her plans, Esther has grown increasingly conscious of death. Like those Negro women who pay exorbitant rates to "death insurance" companies which guarantee honorable burial, like the Chinese women whose coffins lie beside their beds as a symbol of the greatest security of all, Esther lives in terror of a pauper's grave. Jews in Jerusalem are laid to rest uncoffined, in shrouds, for this is holy ground. Yet there are costs to be paid to the official burial society whose black trucks daily climb the hill to the cemetery west of the city, and there are the rabbi's fee and the tombstone to think about.

"Who will pay?" asked Esther frantically of the American friend who first recommended her to us and who still employs her part-time.

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"Your daughters might pay," suggested our friend.

"But they can't," Esther answered; then, brightening, added, "I suppose *you'll* have to pay."

If she were still working for us, I suppose *we* would have to pay. She did work for us for more than a year. When she first came, my Hebrew consisted of a few nouns and a number of infinitives. As I later discovered, Esther's Hebrew was redolent of Aramaic, while a good many words which I might otherwise have understood got hopelessly mashed in her toothless mouth. I relied on pantomime much of the time, demonstrating the workings of the cellulose mop and the vacuum cleaner (borrowed), spreading American glass polish over windows, polishing silver with treated cloths, waxing furniture and emptying ice-cube trays. Esther absorbed only the last (now, as I look back over the roster of maids who have come and gone since Esther Mammy Yokum, my most vivid memory is of the hourly march to the refrigerator, the glasses of ice cubes with a teaspoon of water added, the ritual quaff with which each paid tribute to this most wondrous of household gods). Esther dearly loved the refrigerator, but she had no patience with the rest of the devices we had brought from the States. Before the first week was out she had replaced the cellulose mop with a bucket and floor rag. The vacuum cleaner gave way to a wicker carpet beater with which she attacked rugs and furniture alike. Wet newspaper was used on the windows, steel wool on my cherished sterling, the furniture wax dried on its shelf while Esther went over polished surfaces with soapy rags.

Once a week, Esther pulled a galvanized iron tub out on the kitchen balcony and, squatting on her heels, washed our underwear. She would arrive for work hours late and, often, night fell before she finished, but she refused to relinquish even the hanging of a single sock to me. Stubborn as a puppy, she would wash on and on, singing Arabic songs in her high, sweet voice and accepting no food. No amount of cajoling could get her to the house early enough to permit her to finish before nightfall.

She stayed with us until we left the country. We were gone for two years, but she kept track of us through our friends and neighbors. A week after we returned, Esther came to visit us. She was a bit thinner, but the gamin grin was unchanged. She sat in an armchair with her spindle legs dangling, accepted a cup of black coffee, and told me that times were hard, that work was scarce, that she was growing old. I asked her to work for me.

It was a fiasco. This time, we had a vacuum cleaner of our own and a carpet sweeper as well as new furniture which was cigarette- and alcohol-proof but far from Esther-proof. Our appliances gathered dust and, three times a week, Esther turned up late and stayed until after fall of night. I took to cheating; on her days off, I hired a second woman to take care of the house. Expenses mounted and Esther, working as hard as ever, stayed as late as ever. Finally, I used the excuse of a forthcoming extended trip to dismiss Esther. I found her another job, an action which she, of course, expected of me.

THERE followed, on our return, a steady stream of housemaids, none of whom lasted more than a few weeks. They ranged from native-born Oriental teen-agers to middle-aged Poles and they shared that belief in the common destiny of Jews which helped to produce the State of Israel and which, in the extreme, can be interpreted to mean "we are all Jews and what is mine is yours, my brother." Abstractly, this is a pleasant, comforting thesis which makes fine reading when translated into Hebrew and inscribed on parchment. In practice, however, it can be rather upsetting to live with a succession of sisters within the confines of a four-room flat. There were adolescent sisters seeking guidance; contemporaries eager for cozy confessional sessions; elder sisters who patronized me. Above all, there was an atmosphere of intense competition which grew in each case as each sister familiarized herself with

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my admittedly frivolous underwear and my well-stocked food shelves. As time went on, I developed a pervasive sense of guilt about my good fortune and, sensing this, my sibling rivals laid relentless siege to my wardrobe and my larder. On several occasions, I parted with clothing which I needed because I was convinced that the needs of my latest housemaid were greater than mine. Often I found myself preparing large, protein-laden lunches for the maid while my husband and I sat down to sandwiches and coffee. I grew used to the disappearance of bars of chocolate and took to hiding tinned meat from the accusing eyes of my household help.

They came and they went. A few were discharged after their resentment at my life of comparative ease manifested itself in passive resistance to the more unpleasant household tasks. A few—the more intelligent—left because of dissatisfaction with the status of housemaid; they returned to their homes, nursed their pride for a time and then, driven by economic necessity, unskilled and unable to find other work, took jobs as housemaids elsewhere. One went back to school. One absconded with six bars of chocolate. One, a doll-faced Yugoslav immigrant whose non-Jewish husband had refused to accompany her to Israel and who had placed her young child in a convent crèche, borrowed five pounds and disappeared, house-key and all, leaving her work clothes behind. I encountered her a few weeks later in a Jerusalem night spot. She was better dressed than I and she greeted me effusively, returned the key, and promised to come by to pick up her clothes and repay the loan. Her dress and shoes are still here.

"Poor" Esther was an exception to the sisterhood. A recent immigrant from Iraq, she lived in a shack in the nearby Talpiot Ma'abara, one of the immigrant work villages which are slowly being emptied as new housing is built. Her husband, she told me at first, had died on the way from Iraq; this was later revised and one day he popped up again, alive but sick. Her five children, ranging in age from sixteen months to nine years, lived with the parents in a single room; the eldest, a boy, did not attend school because he had no shoes. The next child was, as Esther put it, "crazy," but, according to my own interpretation, idiotic.

Esther herself was a sweet, primitive, stupid person. She was somehow misshapen, for her broad feet in their too-big, unlaced men's shoes and her sturdy legs didn't belong with her thin-shouldered torso. Her face was too wide and guileless for its expression of hurt, resentful misery. From the moment I saw her, I knew her for a sick woman and, as the weeks went by, I came to connect her slow, painful progress with what I had heard about unchecked amoebic dysentery or malaria.

She needed money badly and I paid her well, but the money seemed to do her no good. Every afternoon, after she had washed the floor and somnolently passed a cloth over the furniture, she would ask for a piece of bread and—despite my offers of real food—select the stale heel of yesterday's loaf and leave. I would sometimes watch her as she walked across the fields toward the Ma'abara; she ate as she plodded along and she often stumbled as she went.

Finally, I let her go for no reason which she could assimilate. I had often spoken to her about using my hairbrush and face towels, had tried to explain the principles of hygiene on every level. One day I walked into the kitchen and found her wiping her mouth on a dish towel. She went uncomplainingly and left me with the sort of guilt feeling I had as a child when I did something wrong and got away with it.

At that point, I wanted Esther Mammy Yokum back, but she has never forgiven me my treachery. I still see her now and then in town or in the homes of friends who have grown used to the late hours she keeps. She is warm and gay as ever, and each time we meet she brings me up-to-date on the well-being of her employers and the love which their children bear her.

"Everybody likes me," she says. Then, if I am with a third person, she turns to him and adds, with a laugh, "except Judy."

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THE DEVOUT

A Story

ELAINE GOTTLIEB

WHEN Tess and her brother were very young, God was the most exciting thing they knew. They thanked Him for bread, for fruit, for meat, in prayers taught by their grandparents. Their grandmother, who should have been an actress, told them, with dramatic emphasis, stories from the Bible. Moses, the little boy who had been saved by a princess, became their hero. In the morning, they began to enjoy the cereal they had once detested, for it became the Red Sea. They parted the waters for the Jews and closed them again in order to drown the Egyptians. But the most exciting portion of the legend came where Moses outdid the Egyptian magicians, scourge for scourge, plague for plague. That would show them they couldn't meddle with one who had God on his side!

Ah, if they, the children, only had God on their side! What wondrous tricks they could perform! How afraid the adults would be then to superimpose their desires, their will, on the children's other desires, on their will to do otherwise! There were too many adults in their grandparents' house, where their mother, who worked, had moved after the death of their father. Their father and the other, smaller home were submerged in the commotion of those other lives, this movement up and down stairs, this gathering of taller bodies around the smaller ones. The aunts and uncles were occupied with school, with jobs, with clothes, with parties, with the newest dance steps, boy friends, girl friends. They liked to gossip. They liked the pianola, and the victrola, and the radio and the car. They gossiped about everyone they knew. And when Tess asked one of her aunts where her father was, she simply stared at the girl in embarrassment. Tess's brother, two years younger, waited with her for the answer. "Why . . . he's away," her aunt said, impatiently, guiltily, as though she had killed him.

"And when is he coming back?"

She brushed the children off, told them to eat their supper or go inside or outside or simply to bed.

"I know," Tess told her brother one day. "He's dead."

"I'm not going to die," announced her brother.

"Oh yes you will."

"No. I'll be like Moses. Moses didn't die. I'll be a rabbi. I'll know how not to die. I'll be closer to God than anyone. . . ."

What can I be? Tess wondered, helplessly. It suddenly occurred to her that there was no redemption in store for a girl, no arising, no escape. A girl could become nothing but a mother. Perhaps I could marry a rabbi, she thought, or I could become president of Hadassah. No . . . she thought . . . No. . . .

Tess and her brother began to study Hebrew. Why he was studying was clear enough to her. But, aside from the fact that she liked to watch the handsome shy face of the tutor, she did not see how the lessons applied to her. Could she be Bar Mitzvah? She grew fond of the tutor, grew fond of the Hebrew characters. But she gave up Hebrew and soon forgot it.

When her grandmother gave the children warm milk in glasses, Tess would sometimes imagine that she saw Hebrew letters left

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by the milk on the sides of the glass. If only they could be deciphered! She examined them closely. They were perhaps a message to her alone, from the Infinite, herself the agent of God.

"What are you looking at?" her brother would ask.

"Oh nothing . . ." and Tess, covering the glass, would drink her milk quickly. It was a message to herself, alone, she was sure, even if she did not understand it. She watched everywhere for signs. Surely something would appear some day.

AT ABOUT the time her brother entered the Talmud Torah to study Hebrew for two hours after public school each day, Tess gave up Sunday school. She had never been too devoted to it, preferring to play in the street, in the garden, or in her room. Her mother was annoyed. Her grandmother shook her head: "The girl is growing up without religion," she said, from the deep cavern of mourning within her.

Tess's grandmother knew great heights of excitement and depths of despair. Celebrations and games found her happy as a child with the music and good things and, in the case of parties or holidays, the dressing up. But the calamity of death, the shock of sacrilege, found her depressed beyond restoration. Once she showed Tess a thermometer-like object hanging outside the front door. "That," she said, "is a *mezuzah*. If you should ever marry someone who is not Jewish, I will have to take it down." Tess was awed by the responsibility, and immediately felt capable of possible betrayal. Tess's mother was afraid to tell the grandmother that the girl would not go to Sunday school; and on holidays, there was always a struggle to get her to the synagogue. "You must go," her mother would say, "or Grandma will be hurt."

Tess did not like the synagogue. The service was incomprehensible, particularly after she had forgotten Hebrew. But even before she forgot, it was difficult to follow the disunited gabble of the congregation, which never seemed to be doing the same thing at the same time. There was always a buzz, a swaying, a moaning, and in the women's balcony, where Tess had to be, there were indrawn breaths, sobs, tears, the smell of perspiration, fainting. Tess would console herself with the thought that she was wearing a new outfit for the occasion. She scanned the shawled backs of the male congregation down below, searching for handsome young men. They were not too easily discerned amidst the *yarmelkes*. Sometimes she glanced toward the stained glass window at her left; the colors seemed beautiful to her, the blue and gold and scarlet. The central figure was that of Moses. She tried to think of Moses, tried to think of God. But the sense of them drifted away, drowned in a medley of prayer.

Yet, for all her irreligiousness, she thought of God. She could not help thinking of Him. He seemed to be with her when she prayed at night, to surround her, watching, promising. She had to have a father, and God was her father. She spoke to Him intimately at night, asked Him to grant certain wishes. The shadows of nighttime flew over the ceiling as she dreamed her conversations with God. The sense of Him flowed into, met the sense of other things. . . . He inherited not only the love she had felt for her father, but also the belief she had imbibed with fairy tales . . . that miracles were possible, that there was a fairy godmother. . . .

"Make me beautiful, please, dear God," she would say. "I love you, God," she would add, afraid He might think she would give nothing in exchange.

But though she prayed before her mother's big mirror, and lowered her head in her arms, to provide God with an opportunity for surprising her, she found no startling change come over her face. Perhaps this is not the time, she would tell herself. Perhaps, if I keep on praying. . . .

SHE used to dream of photographs. The photographs were all taken when her father was alive, and usually he was in them. While, in her dream, she watched them, the figures—her mother, her brother—would

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move, laugh, kiss and be kissed, and the trees would shimmer again with the summer breeze, and the fragrance of trees, many sweet budding flowers, would envelop her . . . and she would re-enter the photograph, acting in it as she had once acted, running, laughing, and wanting to stay. Often, at night, alone in her room, she would gaze at the portrait of her father that stood on the dresser. It looked so much like him. How could it look so much like him? She would lower her head and pray to God to make it speak, to make the eyelids move and the flesh become warm, something to be touched.

"Is there a God?" she asked her mother one night, at the age of twelve.

"Of course," her mother said.

"Of course," Tess's brother repeated solemnly. "You should go to *shul* more often. It would bring you closer to God."

Tess envied him, that he could feel so sure, could feel himself so close. But then, he was the one who did things the right way—even his piano-playing. "You play too fast, too loudly," they told Tess. "So gentle, such a soft touch," they would say of her brother.

Why he was always so good, why he was never as disturbed as she, Tess could not understand. He was even more thrifty than she, saving pennies and birthday money until he had great sums. "What will you do with all your money?" Tess asked him when he decided to start a bank account.

"Why, I'll help Mother, of course," he said gravely, drawing himself up, and looking at her with what she thought was an accusing eye. She knew she was a spendthrift, but she could not help herself. There was so much she wanted.

Tess was offended by her brother's incriminating glance. How could he thus place himself outside her, judging? How could he set her outside her love for him? She had always loved him dearly. Although he was only two years younger than she, he had always been her little brother, naturally inclined to be small, so that he was babyish-looking for a long time. For a long time, he had large black glowing eyes with curly lashes; his hair was a mass of black ringlets; his cheeks were rosy; he had his father's coloring. Since infancy, it seemed, he had been her willing partner in games.

Although eventually he grew ashamed of her, ashamed of the fact that she was thriftless, not good at arithmetic, uninterested in religion, had wild hair, was very thin, not pretty, and wrote poetry, for a long time they played together more than they played with other children. They played basketball in the back yard, beneath a tree one of their uncles had fitted with a basket. They buried "treasure"—bits of colored glass, some foreign coins, a silver wedding band found on the sidewalk. They lowered a basket from the attic down the stairwell to the ground floor, and filled the basket with "provisions" stolen from the pantry. They acted out an unending drama, that of "Joe and Gertie," a couple always involved in some exotic situation. Sometimes Gertie was a princess, and sometimes she was a witch. Once Tess was Gertie-the-dancing-girl, while her brother, seated cross-legged on the bed, was a particularly infantile-looking pasha, named Joe.

Now, whether her brother associated her with infancy, with his littleness, or with the shameful fact that they were more affectionate with each other than were most brothers and sisters, he began, as he approached public school graduation, and his Bar Mitzvah, his coming of age, his manliness, to shake her off with more or less indignation.

"Why do you always have to touch me?" he would say, going off.

When she was ill and asked him to stay inside and play with her, he became very angry. "I want to go outside and play," he said. Something was making him cruel.

Something also was paring him down. The round, cherub-like face had grown paler, thinner. The gleaming black ringlets had been replaced by a wet flat mass of hair. He wore bulging knickers and heavy socks. He shined his shoes grimly every evening. His hands moved in a captive fashion. His eyes grew narrow and a little bloodshot. He was always in his room, studying.

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"That's a *mensch* for you, eh?" her grandmother would comment, as, with self-conscious compression of the lips, he helped remove the dinner dishes from the table.

"What's the matter with you?" her mother would ask. "Why don't you help?"

"She's dreaming again," Tess's grandmother would say. "Stop dreaming; where will it get you?"

And her youngest aunt, always more critical than the others, would say, "There's no reason why she should sit here while everyone else helps."

Tess made a token trip to the kitchen, but she wanted to run away. She ran away to the protests within herself. There was something beyond what they said, and she could not get to it. There was something beyond appearances, and she only sensed it, and could not make them aware of it.

There is a right way that is not the apparent way, she told herself. Within her there was a pressure of questions.

WHAT was God? Did she not sense Him watching, though He had no eyes, listening, knowing her, though He did not speak? *Something*, at any rate, surrounded her, though she could not specifically describe it. It was close, closer to her than her mother or even her father, who had died. It lived within her . . . and sometimes she felt like singing Its song. . . .

"God is a man," a little boy had once said to her, scornfully, in an attempt to explain the inequality of the sexes. But God the man was inconceivable to Tess. Moses the man and Jacob the man, but not God.

She wanted to be able to understand Him; if not to see Him, then to know where He was. She had been presented with a picture of heaven as something more or less like strata, a layer like marble, high up, away. She would lie on the grass in the garden sometimes, and look up through the sky, trying to pierce a shifting, fluid blue. Was it blue upon blue upon blue, then, and nothing to stand on?

It was a shooting star, very close to earth, that made her tremble uncontrollably that night of her twelfth year. Would the earth burn; would the sun devour it? And her eyes too?

She felt terribly alone. She ran to her brother to find him and clasp him, but her brother had a suspicious face, startled at the thought of love. She ran to him to make his touch dissemble the terror in her bones. But he did not understand her fear. He was in the large kitchen watching their mother iron one of his shirts. "Let me do the rest," he said, standing suddenly.

She glanced from one to the other, and then at her grandmother. She merely wanted to touch her brother, the warm hand. "What's the matter with you?" he asked, in distaste, as she stood beside him. "Leave me alone." He shook off her arm, and began to iron furiously.

Did none of them sense the terror in her? Did her grandfather, mumbling there in the corner, half asleep over a prayerbook? He was always praying. What did he pray?

Her grandmother offered her a cup of tea. There was always, in emergencies, a cup of tea. Perhaps, thought Tess, she feels something is wrong. A cup of tea, she thinks, will dissolve it.

"You are growing up," her grandmother commented, looking at Tess. "You're a good-looking girl. You'll have a nice figure. You'll get married, have babies. . . ."

Her grandfather had fallen asleep, head back, and was snoring. "What a racket," her grandmother said, in disgust.

The grandmother's disgust with the grandfather was undisguised. Since he had failed in business, grown deaf, asthmatic, and heavy-featured, she had little use for him. He used to, after dinner, lean panting against the sideboard in the dining room, wheezing, trying to catch his breath, clutching the atomizer. As she passed him, on the way to the kitchen, Tess's grandmother, in tones of supreme loathing, would hiss, "Dumb ox!"

Yet, it was always a reverent moment, when, on Saturday nights, he held a glass of *shnapps* in his hand for the sacramental prayer, and then pouring it into a dish, set fire to it. Tess, who had to be present with

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her brother, liked to watch. She was fascinated by the blue flame whirling like a dancer's skirt. Such a rapid, unpredictable dance!

And it was also important to be present when her grandfather led the Passover service . . . although only her grandmother really seemed to listen. Dressed, traditionally, in white, her grandmother listened, listening not so much to the praying one as to the prayer. The grandfather seemed a necessary vehicle, a male mouthpiece. There were certain things that only men were supposed to do.

As for the rest of the family, it was hard for Tess to know whether they really heard what was chanted. Surely they had their eyes on the Haggadah, and thumbed the pages and knew where the place was, and sang: "One Only Kid . . ." but how could the story of the Exodus seem like anything to them, when their expressions did not change, except to lighter ones, when they never sighed nor wept, but merely turned the pages as though it were the thing that had to be done?

They were a somber group, Tess, in her fifteenth year, thought, seeing them seated around the table, hollow-faced, leaden-eyed, weighed down by the solemnity of something, afraid to smile just yet. They dipped their fingers in wine, counting the plagues. They broke *matzos*, ate the bitter herb. When there was a lull in the prayer two aunts began to gossip.

Tess's brother stood up and read the four questions. "Wherefore is this night different from all other nights?"

Because Grandma is dressed in white, Tess thought.

Her brother had been Bar Mitzvah recently. The grandmother nodded approvingly, smiling.

One uncle looked out of the window. Another tied his shoelace. Tess sat near the two eldest. They leaned their heads together, and one said, "Let's go out afterwards, hmm?"

Tess's mother looked at her in annoyance. "Why don't you read?" she asked.

"It's a boring story," Tess told her, not meaning that exactly.

Tess's mother opened her eyes very wide, as she did when she was angry. "I can't understand your attitude toward religion," she said. "Why, I've done everything a mother. . . ."

"Shhh . . ." warned the grandmother. The eldest uncle had gone out to the hall to open the door for Elijah. Tess glanced toward the lone glass of wine in the center of the table.

"Now watch," grinned one of the aunts, "see if he takes a sip."

A cold breath of air entered. The surface of the wine trembled, and Tess thought: perhaps, perhaps . . . and clasped her hands very hard beneath the table.

But the hall door shut clamorously, and her uncle tramped back, laughing, "Well, did he come?"

Tess arose at her seat and began to leave. "Wait," said her mother, "where are you going? Grandpa isn't finished yet."

"I can't listen any more," Tess said, walking out.

Her mother, running after her, took hold of her shoulder. "You can't do this. Think of Grandma!"

"Think of me! I can't listen. I can't believe any of it! It's not my religion!"

"Stella . . ." her grandmother called.

"I'll say you had a headache," her mother said hastily. "It would break Grandma's heart if she knew. Why do you act this way? Don't you believe in God?"

Tess went into her room and lay down. She wept and tossed about, beat at the pillow and tore at its edges. I wanted God to come to me, she thought. . . . If you are there why don't you come? she whispered. Why don't you give me a sign, why don't you tell me as you told David, Abraham, Moses? Where are you? Where are your miracles? . . . If I die will I know you?

She wanted to die and not die. She wanted to leave her body. Her body was a contrivance to keep her from knowing. Why was she always bound by breath and pain?

She tried to suck herself inward, hold

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herself tight, reduce herself to an essence, a dot. The final breath beat against her ribs. Her heart was loud with warning. She heard it close, too close. And then, as she held her breath for the longest span, she thought her heart was about to be lost. She thought: perhaps it won't come back. . . . And she was afraid.

Had she almost heard then? Or was it the wind brushing the leaves against her window or a sparrow flapping against the glass?

THAT spring, the spring of her fifteenth year, Tess stopped going to the synagogue altogether. Her mother was angry, threatened, scolded, urged, pleaded, tried to make Tess feel very guilty. Tess did feel guilty. What had she done to them?

She was never with the family any longer. When she sat with them at meals, she never heard what they were saying, having withdrawn to some hidden whorl of absolute solitude. "The girl doesn't hear well," her grandmother would say.

"God is punishing you," her mother would whisper.

Burdened with guilt, Tess let herself be kissed by her grandmother before the older woman left for the synagogue on Yom Kippur morning. Dressed in her best clothes, wearing a fur stole, smelling of eau de cologne and powder, the grandmother said, "Goodbye." Always, since she was a child, Tess had been astonished to hear this goodbye. "Where is Grandma going?" she had asked.

"She is going to ask God to forgive her for all her sins," Tess's mother had answered.

At the end of summer, on Yom Kippur, in her fifteenth year, Tess passed some of the congregation gathered outside the synagogue. They were patting their faces. They had come out for air. Inside, in the women's balcony, Tess knew, the air was stifling with sweat and sobs.

Tess glimpsed her brother standing outside with an uncle. Her brother was fasting with the others. How proud of himself, and how full of disapproval he would be, she knew, when she saw him at night! She averted her face and walked rapidly, regretting having taken this street for her stroll. Where was she going? She did not know. But suddenly she found herself running.

Running, there seemed to be a dread in her that would neither rise nor be quelled. What am I running from? she thought. But she knew it was them, that crowd outside the synagogue. As in dreams, she felt their fury following; as in dreams when they tried to pull her down from the sky into which she leaped.

She ran towards the bay, the green trees of the park, the sunlight; the air, spun with pollen and earth.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

SUMMER DAY

A Chapter from Boyhood

JACK LURIA

WE LIVE beyond experiences, but we do not always outlive them. Even today the smell of fresh rye bread and the click of billiard balls waken memories of my childhood which almost thirty years have not swept away. The gas-lit, red brick house in which I passed my fifth to my thirteenth year comes alive in all its dinginess, its wooden steps and banisters rickety, the smell of alley cat everlastingly over its halls. And there is the bakery on one side of the street door and the poolroom on the other.

One day in particular lingers, defying time to touch it. It was a day during my tenth summer, lonely and tortured by longing and hope and frustration as were so many like it. All around me loomed a world that brushed me aside, making light of my desires and laughing at me. But before the day ended I had stood up and demanded that my voice be heard.

During the summer months I was alone most of the time. My mother, ever since my father died, worked in a mattress factory nearby. One of my two sisters had an office job with interminable hours, while the other was always away at the homes of her friends. Except on Saturday I hardly ever saw either of them. Each morning my mother said to me, "Stay in the park until I come home for lunch. And cross the street with a big person." When she left, she turned her head in a last worried look. That my spirit might be in danger never entered her mind. She knew that I kept away from the street rowdies, and she had surrounded me closely with all the shalt nots of her intense religious faith.

It was still early when I came to the park on the water front that morning, and a moist, sticky breeze hung in from the river. The sun heaving up from behind the gray-blue latticework of the Navy Yard on the Brooklyn side was already hot. An olive-tan tugboat pulling a sea-train screeched forlornly as it rounded Corlears Hook and passed into the shadow of the Williamsburg Bridge. There were no people on the long green benches; only crumpled Eskimo-pie wrappers of the day before lay strewn underfoot. At this hour the unrelieved shabbiness of the park, a desert of yellowed crab grass behind broken chicken-wire fences, was unbearable and I walked back home.

As I stood peeking through the window of the bakery to see if Evie Becker was at the counter, her father bumped into me with a bakepan of jelly tarts he was carrying from the cellar.

"Already you're looking for Evie?" the baker said. "Ten years old and already in love! It's too early in the morning. What's your hurry?" His eyes twinkled and his muscles rolled up and down his bare arms

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as he rested the tray on his knees. Summer and winter he dressed in an undershirt, a pair of flour-whitened pants, and a golfer's cap.

I flushed and stammered. "I—uh—just wanted to see if it isn't busy in the store. Ida lets me read the *News*."

"Sure, sure, it's the newspaper, not love," he said and pulled my white sailor hat over my eyes. But when he had brought the paper out to me, I sat on the curbstone, holding it before me but not reading. I felt scorned and mocked. Only two Sundays ago I had gone with Evie to the movies on Chatham Square to see *The Covered Wagon*. The picture had been exciting, but much more memorable had been walking home through the dark streets afterwards, holding hands with Evie. She had cowered against me each time a strange-looking Chinese had passed, even though she was two years older than I and very clever for her age. I thought of a dozen excuses each day now to go into the bakery just to catch sight of Evie.

I went back to the store and laid the newspaper under the window case. Between the window and the counter there was a little wooden bench, and I sat down on it. The morning rush for fresh rolls was still on, and neither Mrs. Becker nor Evie's older sister Ida took notice of me as I watched the people come and go. The beautiful warm, yeasty smell wound itself about me like a web.

Mrs. Becker fascinated me. She was a short, chunky woman with heavy bosom and a mass of inky black hair which she wore in a pompadour. She had pince-nez glasses attached by a gold chain to her ear and carried herself with a teacher-like sternness. She even doled out rolls and gave out change with authority. Yet though she was never genial like her husband, she was sometimes so motherly to me that I forgave her sharp words. I never knew whether I was really fond of her.

When there was a lull in the stream of customers, Mrs. Becker looked up and said, "Already he's here—Evie's sheik."

"That's what I call true love," said Ida. At fifteen she already looked a full-grown woman, and she aped one. "What did Evie do to deserve it?"

"And who asked you, Bigmouth?" said Mrs. Becker, suddenly angry with Ida.

I felt myself grow crimson. Hastily I grabbed up the newspaper and said, "I'm reading the comics in the *News*."

"Oh, Papa took the paper out to you," Ida said, eyeing me with affected slyness. "I saw him even."

"I didn't finish," I insisted. I pretended to read, holding the paper high enough to hide my face.

Mr. Becker came in with a huge basket of onion rolls and emptied them into a bin. He drew out a cigarette and lit it. "My last one," he said. "You'll go across the street to the candy store and get me a pack of Schinazis, sonny?"

As I started through the screen door, Ida said, "Wait a minute, kiddo. Will you do me a favor too?"

I lowered my eyes and said in a choked voice, "No."

"Aw, you silly kid," cried Ida. "Just imagine! He gets sore I'm kidding him about Evie. Here—get me two bricks of ice cream." She laughed and forced the money on me.

When I came back, Mr. Becker told me to keep the two cents change left from the cigarette money. Ida immediately bit into one ice-cream brick and shoved the other at me. I protested at first, for my mother had scolded me for letting Ida treat me before. "Don't take from anybody," my mother had said. "I can afford, thank God, to buy you ice cream myself." Yet she seemed to have forgotten always to give me the money for it.

For the moment I lost myself in delight: I bit into a little of each flavor, letting the sweetness of the vanilla mix with the faintly bitter chocolate and the sour aftertaste of the strawberry.

Suddenly I heard someone come into the little kitchen in the back of the store. I pretended unconcern, but inwardly I trembled. I sneaked a glance: through the half-open door I saw Evie at the gas stove. There was a quick sizzle of grease and a smell of smoked salmon and eggs frying. Oh, how I wished that Evie would call me into the kitchen! But suddenly I could not bear to have Evie find me there eating Ida's ice cream. There would be jokes and laughter, and I would sit uncomfortably blushing. I had to escape. I put the paper away and slowly pushed the screen door open.

IT WAS after ten o'clock now. The sun was blazing and no breeze from the river

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tempered the muggy heat. I walked the block to the park, hoping that one of my few friends would be there. I looked for them in the shade of the overgrown privet hedges, where we had a secret bunk. In this weather the yellowish white blooms smelled like rancid butter. Our bunk was deserted.

From the dock of the flour mill naked boys were already diving into the rainbow oily water. They almost all made the sign of the cross before they dove. A few days before a man had hit his head on an upturned milk-can cover and never came up alive.

As I lost myself watching the swimmers, two grimy boys armed with iron spikes came suddenly upon me and said, "Get out of this park, Jew boy, or we'll mopolize you." But first they tore the sailor hat from my head and went through my pockets. They rejected pencil stubs, bits of colored chalk, and a broken toy frog. They seized eagerly on the two cents, and one of them kicked my behind while the other snarled, "You wanna live? Don't let us ketch you around here again—unnerstand?"

I wiped my tears with my shirt sleeve. If only I belonged to a gang! I would come back with my comrades, seek out the two with the iron spikes, and have my revenge. But I was alone.

I went back to the bakery and found Evie alone at the counter now. She called through the plate-glass window, "Here's the *News*, Skinny!" For the third time that morning I tried to read the comics. In the presence of Evie I saw nothing at all of the print. I looked at her furtively. She had plump arms, curly dark brown hair, and eyes of two different colors, one brown and one blue. I would never have known that, but a man once came into the store and said, "Evie, why don't you get two eyes that match?" Evie had been ready with a quick answer, "They're the best pair of eyes I have. I got no complaints, Mr. Buttinsky." After that Evie had become more attractive to me than ever; nothing about her was ordinary.

Evie was saying something, but I heard nothing at first for the music that flowed through my head. "My mother is taking us to Coney Island, if it's a nice day Saturday," I heard her say at last. "Maybe we'll even go to Steeplechase. You think you could come with us?"

"No," I answered. "My mother wouldn't let me go on Saturday. It's *Shabbos*."

"Aw, *Shabbos!*" exclaimed Evie. "Do you hurt somebody if you go somewhere on *Shabbos?*"

I clenched my fists in frustration. My mother kept the Sabbath so religiously that we were not allowed even to turn on the gaslight after the Friday evening candles burned out. On cold winter Sabbaths we shivered in bed until an Italian boy came to start a fire in the stove. After breakfast we all went to synagogue. In the afternoon I listened to my mother read the Bible chapter for the week in Yiddish translation, and then we went for a quiet walk in the park. This was the holy day of rest, and my mother suffered nothing to disturb the complete peace of it.

The smell of seeded rye started hunger pangs in me. A fly caught on a strip of flypaper was buzzing madly. The flypaper had a castor-oil smell which was usually pleasant somehow. Now it nauseated me.

"Don't forget. Ask your mother. Maybe she'll let you come," said Evie.

UPSTAIRS in the crowded little kitchen I spooned my beet soup slowly. "Hurry, my son, you know I have only a half hour for lunch," my mother said. "What are you dreaming about anyway?"

"Mama!" I blurted out. "Can I go to Coney Island?"

"Coney Island? What's the matter all of a sudden?" my mother asked. Her face was careworn but determined, and her faded blue eyes turned on me, suddenly alert.

"Evie's mother will take me," I said.

"Oh, so! And when are they going?" my mother asked.

"The day after tomorrow," I said, feeling all my determination drain away.

"On *Shabbos!*" she exclaimed. "Suddenly you're crazy?" She put a slice of pumpernickel overlaid with sardines before me. "Against the Beckers I have nothing, absolutely nothing. Mrs. Becker is better than a bad sister to me. But when it comes to religion, she might as well be a *goy*. Now hurry up."

"I can't eat any more," I said and left the table.

I sat on the doorstep of my house, wondering if Evie was still at the counter, but not daring to go see. After a while I heard Fatso,

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the poolroom owner, cranking his awning down. A few idlers began to drift in. I stood alongside the door, watching them chalk their cues. A smell of cheap cigars and stale perspiration hung about the poolroom. Fatso went over the floor delicately with a broom, sweeping into the gutter the more inescapable refuse like cigarette butts and tootsie-roll wrappers.

An open black car drove up to the curb. A broadly built man in a gleaming white starched shirt with the sleeves rolled up halfway to the elbow got out and slammed the door. He brushed roughly past me. "Out of my way, kid," he ordered.

"You're looking like a million," Fatso greeted him. I watched how the others made way for Gimp at the front table. One boy hastily gathered the balls together from the pockets and arranged them in the rack.

As his cold gray eyes measured the huddled clump of balls, the muscles on Gimp's face hardened. His cue smashed brutally into the target, and for a moment his eyes flashed with savage power. Each of Gimp's strokes had the same calculated command of force. I watched, hypnotized.

A tough-looking red-headed boy slunk into the poolroom. Gimp talked to him for a few minutes in a low voice, holding the cue like a horsewhip, hand end up. Finally the stick moved menacingly and the red-head put his arm up defensively.

"How many times I gotta tell you anyone works for me keeps his nose clean?" Gimp snarled. He struck a ball so furiously that it jumped off the table. I ran in to pick the ball up.

I stood at the door again, quivering with excitement. The hours rushed by, but I was lost in a world without time. Suddenly I felt myself yanked by the collar, and my mother's voice cried out, "This is the son I'm bringing up! How lucky for your father that he didn't live to see this!"

She pulled me into the bakeshop. "See what I give my life for! I slave in the shop day after day, and my only son will send me to an early grave!" she lamented. Luckily only Mrs. Becker was in the store.

"Such a son I should have," said Mrs. Becker. "A good head he has, a bum he isn't. What do you want of him?"

"If he stands all day in the poolroom, what is he if not a bum?" cried my mother. "What do you want him to do yet? Rob? Murder?"

"Such a bum my Evie's husband should be," Mrs. Becker replied.

Embarrassment washed over me like heat from the bakery cellar. I pulled away from my mother's grip and ran out of the store. I wandered through the furnace-hot streets, dazzled by the tight lines of pushcarts on Monroe Street, repelled and drawn by the acrid smell of rotten onions and the fragrance of half-sour pickles and hot peppered fava beans. A Negro on a wagon piled with watermelons was holding a quarter slice aloft on the tip of a knife and chanting, "Wahdeemelons! Wahdeemelons! Sweet as honey—good as money! Wahdeemelons! Wahdeemelons!" I grew painfully hungry and turned towards home.

It was so hot in our flat after supper that my mother sent me down for fresh air. Someone behind me put his hands over my eyes and cried, "Guess who?"

"Jack Dempsey, world champion," I said.

"Wrong! Harry Wills can beat Dempsey any day, but they won't give him a chance. My father says so," said Sammy Fink, pulling his hands away. I was so happy to see a friend at last that when he said, "Let's go to the park!" I didn't object. Yet my experience of that morning was still terrifyingly fresh.

The park was stuffed with people now. They spilled over the benches, onto the grass and the fences. A searchlight beam from across the river picked out couples huddled in the bushes, and there were squeals of laughter.

The tide came in with a smell of sewage and salt spray, and washed with ominous rhythm against the breakwater. We saw a crowd gathered around something covered with a tarpaulin on a dock at the edge of the park. A cop held back the people, swinging his club with a bored expression.

"They just picked up a body from the river," a man told us. A revolting stench floated toward the crowd. A boy stole past the cop and lifted a cover of the tarpaulin. The crowd roared with laughter at the cop's anger.

I felt like vomiting and shouted at Sammy, "Last one out of the park smells like a dead fish!"

I mounted the creaking wooden steps to our flat. The smell of cat hung heavy over

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the hall. Silhouetted by the dim gaslight, a girl was embracing a fellow on the third floor landing.

I lay on my cot bewildered. I saw myself surrounded everywhere by high strong fences. How would I ever break those fences down? Someday I would take Evie away from here, I thought. Just as in the story books, we would wander through green fields. From a hilltop we would see the valley below, we who had known only the clamor of the city.

From below came the clicking of billiard balls. Suddenly there was a sound of crashing balls, powerful, masterful, decisive beyond all the others. Before me was a vision of the muscles hardening about Gimp's jaws. Before such a face all fences would crash to the ground. "Gimp! Gimp!" I whispered in the dark.

I jumped up from my cot and rushed into the kitchen where my mother was still up reading a Yiddish newspaper by gaslight. "Mama!" I cried. "I'm going to Coney Island with Evie!"

My mother's eyes opened wide with astonishment. "God in heaven, a *dybbuk* has come into the child! Go to sleep!"

"No, I'll go to Coney Island on *Shabbos!*"

"Go to sleep—or I'll give you Coney Island with a strap!" she ordered angrily.

"No! No! I'm going!" I shouted.

My mother took a length of clothesline and lashed me. I retreated to my room crying, "I'm going! I'm going!"

Suddenly my mother burst into tears and threw her arms around me. "Oh my son, my only son," she pleaded, "have pity on me. I'll take a day off. I'll go with you to Coney Island. Only have pity on me."

My mother's tears were unconquerable. More quickly than it had flared up, my rebellion died, leaving me miserable and guilty in defeat. I knew that there would be no day at Coney Island with Evie and that I could never, never be like Gimp.

And yet I was not altogether unhappy. I had cried out against my mother, and only her tears had put me down. Next time I would hold out, even against tears. Lifted on a strange surge of triumph, I fell asleep.

A LETTER TO MY MOTHER

SAUL GOTTLIEB

I WONDER if you thought, when you were young
and bobbed your hair and smoked,
that living would be easy and babies fun
and time a slow progression
of qualities of happiness, each deeper
than the last; the past
a gray expanse of desert you danced through
to blue waters where
the playful waves dashed back an image
of your self upon you,
new combinations breaking up the patterns
of the serious individual.

I wonder if you thought, when I was born
and bubbled fatly in your arms,
the love you lavished in my eyes
would always be anchored
hard inside, rich payment for the anatomies
I made your maidenhood;
that love was enough and more than enough
to make a person free;
that this was the beautifully simple plan
your parents never knew
who had rules but never the golden rule,
so free and easy.

I wonder if you thought, when you saw me
kissing my three children,
they too would someday break my heart,
who loves them as you did me,
who knows living is harder work than love,
and time a swift transgression
of the tiniest joys of life, each smaller
than the last; the past
a faded photograph, found in a purse
cluttered with greasy cash
and the regulated patterns of the day
of the serious individual.

SAUL GOTTLIEB's poems have appeared in numerous literary magazines and anthologies. The one we print here is from a group that won the 1952 major Hopwood Award in poetry at the University of Michigan.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

Two Judeo-Spanish Versions of the Event

LADINO is the archaic written idiom of the Spanish-speaking Jews; in it are found translations of the Bible, of liturgy, and of didactic works, and even of some original ethical tracts. The term "Ladino" is commonly but mistakenly applied to the vernacular language of the Sephardim, which is, properly, "Judezmo." Ladino, printed in rabbinic Hebrew characters, has a number of interesting "folk" stories, such as the one below on the discovery of America. (In it, however, there is no mention of Columbus, nor any hint that the discoverer was in any way Jewish.) The story as given is the translation of some pages from a work bearing the Hebrew title *Sefer Derkhe ha-Adam* ("The Book of Man's Ways"), which was published in Salonika in the year 5603 (1842/3), with the "approbation" of Sultan Abdul Medjid. The heterogeneous contents of the volume as a whole are of a derivative authorship. The compiler admits quite freely that most of its incidents are from chapter two of the *Sefer ha-B'rith*, that to this he has added a bit of preachment and a number of parables from the *Sefer ha-Dorot*, from *Shebet Yehudeh* and such like, all of which he has "translated into Ladino." In retranslating this "folk" version I have attempted to reproduce the direct narrative style of the original.

The second story was told to me in Judezmo, and is one of a large number of folk tales that I have gathered by word of mouth which the Sephardic Jews still call by the Spanish term *consejas*, "short moral stories." The one I retell was given me by the naive wife of Rabbi Franco, of the then very small Sephardic community in the only city of the Dodecanese Island of Chios. —WILLIAM MILWITZKY

The New World

SAID King Solomon in Ecclesiastes that there is no new thing in this world which was not before. Yet what we see now seems a new thing to us. May you know for certain that it has been, long before.

And there be those who ask: "What see we now! How many new things come forth each day! How, then, could King Solomon say that there is nothing new?" And the answer is simply that what King Solomon did say is: "There *cannot* come forth new things." Thus, by way of example, there are seven metals in the world: that an eighth may evolve—that cannot be. For, ever since Blessed-Be-His-Name created the world, He for certain created seven metals. Now, that some sort of new grasses or trees should come forth, even that is something that cannot be. Or again, that some new beast or new animal should evolve, neither can that be. And, since all these things in the world cannot come forth as new creations—that is why King Solomon said: "And there is nothing new under the sun."

However, things of artifice that appear each day, such as, by way of example, the steamship—that Solomon did not say. For it is not the metal that has sprung up as a *new* thing: it is rather the *old* iron, which is now needed for the steamship, and the various woods. Thus also the rest of the things that are needed, they are already in the world, except that they had to be worked as instruments for the iron and the wood. Likewise is this true for every kind of utensil that has evolved and will evolve. All are worked with old metals; all these metals already existed, indeed ever since the world was created.

However, as for the Americas, which they found in the year five thousand two hundred and fifty-eight (as is written in the *Sefer Divre ha-Yamim*), they call it the New

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World, and the Turkish language calls it *Yení Dunyá*. Yet, it is not true that it is new. For, ever since Blessed-Be-His-Name created the earth, it was already created together with the Americas. Only this: it has been called *new* for the reason that it was hidden from our eyes. And now I shall teach you how America came to be found.

THERE was a man who lived in the city of Castile. His name was America; he was a Spaniard. And he had a great ship. So he gathered much victuals, which he put inside the ship, for his heart yearned to go upon the Great Sea, which is called *Okeanos*. And so he moved far away from the seat of the world, traveling many days upon the water whither the foot of "the son of man" had not yet passed, not since the time when Blessed-Be-His-Name had created the world. Nor did he behold other than the heaven and the sea.

And they traveled into the wide gulf, until they no longer saw the star by which sailors travel. And this star is called the "Tramontane." In another place I shall teach you that nowadays the sailors do not travel with this star, but rather with the binnacle, which came forth only a little while ago. And I shall teach you how they used to travel by watching this star.

But now that the above-said star was lost to them, they did not know whither to go. And they went as if drunk. Then they sought to turn back; but they could not. Then, at last, their victuals on the ship gave out, and they began to exclaim, each to his God, and they said: "Since there is not the means of returning to dry land, and we are going to die of hunger, all of us together, and since this is surely so, let us cast lots. And upon whom the lot falls, him let us eat, so that we may keep our souls alive. And perhaps, traveling farther forward into the gulf, we shall find land."

And just when they were engaged in these discussions, the captain raised his eyes, and he beheld land far off. And he shouted: "Brothers! I have just seen land!" Then the men became happy; they descended upon land, and they came upon a little town. The people that were in it went about naked, with their shame showing. But they were not ashamed.

And they spoke with these men, but they did not know the sailors' languages and could not understand, except that some sailors knew how to speak the Ishmaelite tongue; and they asked them for bread. Now they brought them a loaf, very dry and black, a loaf that was not of wheat, but rather of the root of a grass that grew there. This root they dry and stamp on, and make it something like a dry flour; then they make it into a loaf and they eat it.

THE people of this little town now marveled much at seeing these Spaniards with their weapons. And when they heard the voice of the gun they marveled much more. Terror took hold of them, and they kept saying: "These are not sons of men, but rather angels from the heavens. And there is none that may say to them: 'Why do you thus, seeing that you burn us with your breaths?'" And they were much afraid. However they led them to their houses, and gave them much gold and silver, while the Spaniards gave them knives and other things that are not found in that place.

And the Spaniards took enough victuals for the way, and much silver and gold, since much of it is found in this place. Then they came to Spain, to their city, happy and gay at heart. And they told their brethren and comrades whatever passed through their heads.

Now many other captains became jealous. Many of them, however, found nothing, and nothing more was heard of them. While many others did find this little town, and they returned thence with much riches.

The King of Spain, since he saw that this land was very good and that in it there was much gold and silver, sent ships with an army, and took a goodly portion of this land. They called it America, because he who found it first was called America; but they also called it New Spain. And the Spaniards built houses, and have remained there to this day. They took the people of this place for slaves, and their daughters for handmaidens. But they dared not talk to their masters since there entered into them the fear of the guns, which they had never seen.

And the Spaniards remained upon the land. They seeded it and planted in it fruit and flower gardens. They also built cities in it, and put their names upon them to be the names of the cities in which they now

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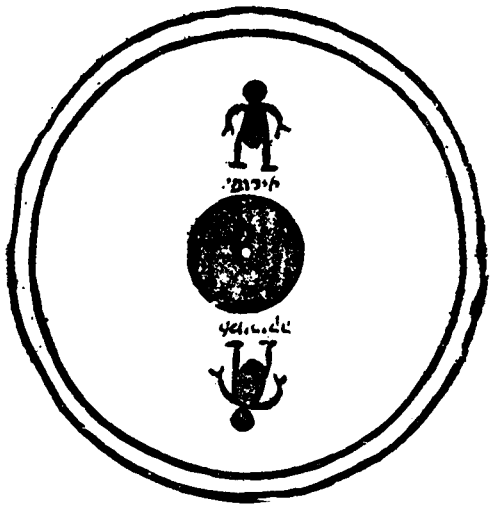
dwelt. And they taught the people that were in the land rules and law and judgment, according to their own will. But the greatest marvel which the people of this land discovered was the following: that if one "son of man" is in another city, and he wishes to acquaint his companion to send him such things as can be found there, and he cannot go to the place where his companion is, he sends him a letter and writes him what he is in need of. And they marveled at what they beheld: that by taking a piece of paper and by taking a piece of reed and then making some black marks, which are the letters, that by accomplishing this feat they let each other understand, be it in the case of an associate or of a friend. And these people of this land kept saying: "A great thing of wonder is this!"

Then, thereafter, the French king sent ships with much armed force, and seized another quantity of the land of those people of whom we have spoken. And he called it New France.

Thus also did the Hollander.

Now you must also know America is below us, as is written in the *Sefer ha-B'rith*. And to us who are dwelling on the continent of Europe, America comes below us, feet against feet. Further must you know that this world which is called Earth is round, like a ball. And the Earth is hung in the air, as it is said: "The Earth is hanging upon nothing." But be not imposed upon that the Earth is in touch with the Sky, as appears in front of yourself. On the contrary, in all directions is the Earth hung upon the air; in all the six parts of the Earth there is Heaven above. This means that above the Earth and below it over the four points of direction (which are North, South, East, and West), in none of these directions does the Earth touch the Sky. Quite the contrary; just as great as is the distance from here to the Sky, let us say for example from Salonika, just so great is the distance from all the six parts [i.e. of the earth].

And since this is so, America is below us, feet against feet, as we have shown. And if as yet you have not understood, well! Then you must look at the figure which is printed below this page.



[Europe and America: from "The Book of Man's Ways"]

Civilizing the Americans

One day were the King and the Queen [i.e. the royal couple of any tale or legend] seated by the window. She [the Queen] spread out a little kerchief, and it began to flutter in the air. Said the Queen: "How curious! Here there must be some land!" When the King heard this he said: "Hold! We shall see whether there is land!"

He ordered two ships and victuals, and sent them to discover a city. They traveled a long time, five months, but found nothing. They turned back, and said to the King that there is nothing and that their bread gave out; that they were dying of hunger.

He filled a much greater ship with bread and ordered that they search for a city. They traveled a long time. They found America. And they saw some men who were like savages. They took a small number of them, and brought them to where the King was. And he saw that they were just so many savages. He put them to school; he taught them to read and write, and made them civilized.

After some time, he sent them back to America. And afterward, all the Americans became civilized.

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ON THE HORIZON

MR. LEWISSOHN'S WICKED SON MR. LEWIS

Folkplay: United States (Jewish)

SHIMON WINCELBERG

THE American Jewish family portrait emerging season after season out of the lukewarm crucible of the Creative Writing class, and from there sometimes into print, has by now become as rigidly typed as the Four Sons of the Haggadah. In some ways it resembles them, too.

The stern but sadly muddled father, unable to reconcile religious tradition with harsh American reality; the dynamo of a mother, striving blindly to heal the unhealable; the rebel son, riding the greased skids of assimilation, commercial success, intermarriage, and mass culture; and the sensitive observer-son (or daughter, depending on who is the writer), looking back upon it all with that exquisite mixture of nostalgia and revulsion.

Even more inflexibly stylized is the dialogue. The inverted syntax, the ponderous question marks, the mawkish transliterations from the Yiddish, the neo-Odetsian metaphors, the misused Hebrew quotations yet.

An almost definitive example of this genre, and one which has been accorded the distinction of being published in a collection titled *International Folkplays* by the University of North Carolina Press, among entries from Norway, China, Syria, Mexico, South Africa, and United States (Negro), is *Wherefore Is This Night?* representing "United States (Jewish)."

Violet Fidel, the young author of *Wherefore*, introduces the play by offering what appear to be her two main categories for American Jews: "What it does to a person to have to lie all his life, like Jack, or to cling tenaciously to something that doesn't exist any more—like Mr. Lewissohn—there's tragedy there." Which seems to leave the American Jew with little more than a choice between two forms of hypocrisy.

THE play opens in the dining room of the Lewissohns—a set described as shabby, old-fashioned, and of undistinguished taste—at six o'clock on Passover eve.

Exposition establishes that the Lewissohns are holding up the Seder in the hope that their son Yankel (Jack) may still show up in time. Jack is currently a brilliant and successful young executive, and his name is now John P. Lewis.

To help pass the time, a younger son, Harvey, teases his father by wishing for a hot dog on a roll, and Lewissohn, Sr., silences him with, "I'll nice crisp roll you in the head," and begins, a little sulkily, to read aloud from a "large Bible."

After a while, Mr. Lewissohn begins to voice some doubts as to whether Yankel

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JEWISH self-understanding in America at times takes some rather odd forms. Here SHIMON WINCELBERG comments on the familiar catastrophic perspective for American Judaism as pictured once again in a one-act play, *Wherefore Is This Night?* by Violet Fidel, published in *International Folkplays* by the University of North Carolina Press. Mr. Wincelberg was born in Kiel, Germany, in 1924 and came to the United States in 1938. He has published stories in the *New Yorker*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and other magazines, and has written for the movies and TV, conducted a column in the *National Jewish Post*, taught Hebrew, and been a part-time student at a Talmudical seminary. This is Mr. Wincelberg's first appearance in COMMENTARY.

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will really bother to show up, whereupon his wife complains, "You're as bad yet as the neighbors," and, a little later, asks herself, "How can I eat what I cooked? It's turned to bitter herbs."

A daughter, Florence, jumps the gun on asking the Four Questions, but is jealously interrupted by brother Harvey with "Yap. Yap. Yap." And as she continues (*"proud of her religion. And herself"*), Harvey (*"teasing"*) breaks in with, "Sharp as matzoh and twice as crummy."

At last, Mr. Lewissohn gets impatient, and, explaining "My faith is important to me," launches into a formula which contains such words as ". . . *Ellojanuh meloch h'olem. . . .*"

But just then, Jack (John P.) walks in, well dressed, if a bit potted at the moment, and carrying a large grocery bag identified as coming from the A & P.

When Florence asks what is in the bag, he testily observes, "Easy now. I'm not Santa Claus," and the stage directions helpfully explain: *"The symbols of the outside world come easily to him."*

JACK, who has been too busy to write letters for the last couple of years, now quickly brings the folks up to date. The blessings a bright future is about to shower upon him include membership in an "exclusive" club, a partnership with his boss, and possibly even marriage to Julie Cartwright, the boss's daughter.

Which leads us straight to the grocery bag. Because Jack has invited Cartwright to supper this evening. Or, rather, old Cartwright has invited himself. Prompted by understandable curiosity about his future partner's family.

So off with the Seder stuff, and on with the bread. Because if Cartwright should suspect that his son-in-law-to-be is a J-w, it would ruin everything. And, to illustrate what he is up against, Jack quotes one of his colleagues: "Jews always prey on blond Christian girls—like Julie. Fat, greasy Jews, with big dark hands." So you can hardly blame Jack for being a bit skittish over the possibility of imminent exposure.

Growing thoughtful for a moment, Jack recalls how, in spite of his "knowing more than anybody" in school, "they shook their heads and said 'smart little Hebe,' and slammed the door to their lives in my face."

In view of which, his father's mild argument that "we don't belong anywhere but at our Seder table" cuts little ice with anybody. Even Mrs. Lewissohn takes Jack's part. Her boy's worries about "belonging" are not little things. They are "big heavy stones we wear around our hearts. Stones from which we build our wailing wall."

And she makes ready to set a supper table for Mr. Cartwright in the dining room, and to transfer what's left of the Seder to the kitchen, though her husband unhappily observes, "You are making a ghetto from the kitchen yet."

But, just in the nick of time, there is a phone message from Cartwright, summoning Jack to meet him at a bar instead. And Jack, forced to decide between a Lewissohn Seder, and life at the side of an unsuspecting Julie Cartwright, responds like a—well, in his father's metaphor, "Just like a monkey on a string—whose coat has some shiny brass buttons." The stage directions offer no information on whether he takes the A & P bread with him.

And so, as the appropriate pall of cheerless devotion to duty once again descends upon the Lewissohn table, and the head of the house *"begins the Boroch Atto in a low voice,"* their two remaining sprouts, one *"haltingly, softly,"* the other *"soberly,"* raise their quavering voices in "Wherefore is this night. . . ."

Wherefore indeed?

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THE STUDY OF MAN

PAUL, THE HORROR COMICS, AND DR. WERTHAM

Communiqué on an Unequal Battle

ROBERT WARSHOW

MY SON Paul, who is eleven years old, belongs to the E.C. Fan-Addict Club, a synthetic organization set up as a promotional device by the Entertaining Comics Group, publishers of *Mad* ("Tales Calculated to Drive You MAD—Humor in a Jugular Vein"), *Panic* ("This is No Comic Book, This is a PANIC—Humor in a Varicose Vein"), *Tales from the Crypt, The Vault of Horror, Weird Science-Fantasy, Shock SuspenStories, Crime SuspenStories* ("Jolting Tales of Tension in the E.C. Tradition"), and, I imagine, various other such periodicals. For his twenty-five-cent membership fee (soon to be raised to fifty cents), the E.C. Fan-Addict receives a humorously phrased certificate of membership, a wallet-size "identification card," a pin and a shoulder-patch bearing the club emblem, and occasional mailings of the club bulletin, which publishes chitchat about the writers, artists, and editors, releases trial balloons on ideas for new comic books, lists members' requests for back numbers, and in general tries to foster in the membership a sense of identification with this particular publishing company and its staff. E.C. Fan-Addict Club Bulletin Number 2, March 1954, also suggests some practical activities for the members. "Everytime you pass your newsstand, fish out the E.C.'s from the bottom of the piles or racks and put 'em up on top.... BUT PLEASE, YOU MONSTERS, DO IT NEATLY!"

Paul, I think, does not quite take this "club" with full seriousness, but it is clear that he does in some way value his membership in it, at least for the present. He has had the club shoulder-patch put on one of his jackets, and when his membership pin broke recently he took the trouble to send for a new one. He has recruited a few of his schoolmates into the organization. If left free to do so, he will buy any comic book which bears the E.C. trademark, and is usually quite satisfied with the purchase. This is not a matter of "loyalty," but seems to reflect some real standard of discrimination; he has occasionally sampled other comic books which imitate the E.C. group and finds them inferior.

IT SHOULD be said that the E.C. comics do in fact display a certain imaginative flair. *Mad* and *Panic* are devoted to a wild, undisciplined machine-gun attack on American popular culture, creating an atmosphere of nagging hilarity something like the clowning of Jerry Lewis. They have come out with covers parodying the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Life*, and once with a vaguely "serious" cover in imitation of magazines like *Harper's* or the *Atlantic*. ("Do you want to look like an idiot reading comic

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THIS department, usually devoted to the examination of more or less finished work in the social sciences, rarely finds an opportunity to present the materials of those sciences in their raw state. The article—or document—published here represents such an opportunity, displaying one parent and one child in their cold war over the question of comic books. The parent, seeking some firm ground on which to make a stand, did look for scientific help, in the form of Dr. Fredric Wertham's recently published book *Seduction of the Innocent* (Rinehart, 397 pp., $4.00), but with mixed results. ROBERT WARSHOW is an associate editor of COMMENTARY. Paul Warshow is a student at the North Country School in Lake Placid, New York, where he is doing rather well in social studies.

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books all your life? Buy *Mad*, then you can look like an idiot reading high-class literature.") The current issue of *Mad* (dated August) has Leonardo's Mona Lisa on the cover, smiling as enigmatically as ever and cradling a copy of *Mad* in her arms. The tendency of the humor, in its insistent violence, is to reduce all culture to indiscriminate anarchy. These comic books are in a line of descent from the Marx Brothers, from the Three Stooges whose funniest business is to poke their fingers in each other's eyes, and from that comic orchestra which starts out playing "serious" music and ends up with all the instruments smashed. A very funny parody of the comic-strip *Little Orphan Annie*, in *Mad* or *Panic*, shows Annie cut into small pieces by a train because Daddy Warbucks' watch is slow and he has arrived just too late for the last minute; Annie's detached head complains: "It hurts when I laugh." The parody ends with the most obvious and most vulgar explanation of why Annie calls Daddy Warbucks "Daddy"; I had some difficulty in explaining that joke to Paul. One of the funnier stories in *Panic* tells of a man who finds himself on the television program "This Is Your Life"; as his old friends and neighbors appear one by one to fill in the story of his life, it becomes clear that nobody has seen his wife since 11:30 P.M. on the ninth of October 1943; shortly before that he had made some rather significant purchases: arsenic, a shovel, quicklime. Evidence piles up, including the actual bones of his wife (dug up by his old dog, Rover, who also appears on the program and will do nothing but growl at his former master). At the end of the program, of course, the man is arrested for murder; television's assault on privacy has reached its logical conclusion. I understand that *Mad* is rather popular among college students, and I have myself read it with a kind of irritated pleasure.

The straightforward crime and horror comics, such as *Shock SuspenStories*, *Crime SuspenStories*, or *The Vault of Horror*, exhibit the same undisciplined imaginativeness and violence without the leavening of humor. One of the more gruesome stories in *Crime SuspenStories* is simply a "serious" version of the story I have outlined from *Panic*: again a man murders his wife (this time with an ax) and buries her in the back yard, and again he is trapped on a television program. In another story, a girl some ten or eleven years old, unhappy in her home life, shoots her father, frames her mother and the mother's lover for the murder, and after their death in the electric chair ("Mommy went first. Then Steve.") is shown living happily with Aunt Kate, who can give her the emotional security she has lacked. The child winks at us from the last panel in appreciation of her own cleverness. Some of the stories, if one takes them simply in terms of their plots, are not unlike the stories of Poe or other writers of horror tales; the publishers of such comic books have not failed to point this out. But of course the bareness of the comic-book form makes an enormous difference. Both the humor and the horror in their utter lack of modulation yield too readily to the child's desire to receive his satisfactions immediately, thus tending to subvert one of the chief elements in the process of growing up, which is to learn to wait; a child's developing appreciation of the complexity of good literature is surely one of the things that contribute to his eventual acceptance of the complexity of life.

I DO not suppose that Paul's enthusiasm for the products of this particular publisher will necessarily last very long. At various times in the past he has been a devotee of the Dell Publishing Company (*Gene Autry*, *Red Ryder*, *Tarzan*, *The Lone Ranger*, etc.), National Comics (*Superman*, *Action Comics*, *Batman*, etc.), *Captain Marvel*, *The Marvel Family*, *Zoo Funnies* (very briefly), *Sergeant Preston of the Yukon*, and, on a higher level, *Pogo Possum*. He has around a hundred and fifty comic books in his room, though he plans to weed out some of those which no longer interest him. He keeps closely aware of dates of publication and watches the newsstands from day to day and from corner to corner if possible; when a comic book he is concerned with is late in appearing, he is likely to get in touch with the publisher to find out what has caused the delay. During the *Pogo* period, indeed, he seemed to be in almost constant communication with Walt Kelly and the Post-Hall Syndicate, asking for original drawings (he has two of them), investigating delays in publication of the comic books (there are quarterly 15-cent comic books, published by Dell, in addition to the daily newspaper strip and the frequent paper-bound volumes published at one dollar by Simon and Schuster), or tracking down rumors that a Pogo shirt or

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some other such object was to be put on the market (the rumors were false; *Pogo* is being kept free of "commercialization"). During the 1952 presidential campaign, Pogo was put forward as a "candidate," and there were buttons saying "I Go Pogo"; Paul managed to acquire about a dozen of these, although, as he was told, they were intended primarily for distribution among college students. Even now he maintains a distant fondness for Pogo, but I am no longer required to buy the New York *Post* every day in order to save the daily strips for him. I think that Paul's desire to put himself directly in touch with the processes by which the comic books are produced may be the expression of a fundamental detachment which helps to protect him from them; the comic books are not a "universe" to him, but simply objects produced for his entertainment.

WHEN Paul was home from school for his spring vacation this year, I took him and two of his classmates to visit the offices of the Entertaining Comics Group at 225 Lafayette Street. (I had been unable to find the company in the telephone book until I thought of looking it up as "Educational Comics"; I am told that this is one of five corporate names under which the firm operates.) As it turned out, there was nothing to be seen except a small anteroom containing a pretty receptionist and a rack of comic books; the editors were in conference and could not be disturbed. (Of course I knew there must be conferences, but this discovery that they actually occur at a particular time and place somehow struck me; I should have liked to know how the editors talked to each other.) In spite of our confinement to the anteroom, however, the children seemed to experience as great a sense of exaltation as if they had found themselves in the actual presence of, say, Gary Cooper.

One of Paul's two friends signed up there and then in the E.C. Fan-Addict Club (Paul had recruited the other one into the club earlier) and each boy bought seven or eight back numbers. When the receptionist obligingly went into the inner offices to see if she could collect a few autographs, the boys by crowding around the door as she opened it managed to catch a glimpse of one of the artists, Johnny Craig, whom Paul recognized from a drawing of him that had appeared in one of the comic books. In response to the boys' excitement, the door was finally opened wide so that for a few seconds they could look at Mr. Craig; he waved at them pleasantly from behind his drawing board and then the door was closed. Before we left, the publisher himself, William Gaines, passed through the anteroom, presumably on his way to the men's room. He too was recognized, shook hands with the boys, and gave them his autograph.

I am sure the children's enthusiasm contained some element of self-parody, or at any rate an effort to live up to the situation—after all, a child is often very uncertain about what is exciting, and how much. It is quite likely that the little sheets of paper bearing the precious autographs have all been misplaced by now. But there is no doubt that the excursion was a great success.

A few weeks later Mr. Gaines testified before a Congressional committee that is investigating the effects of comic books on children and their relation to juvenile delinquency. Mr. Gaines, as one would expect, was opposed to any suggestion that comic books be censored. In his opinion, he said, the only restrictions on the editors of comic books should be the ordinary restrictions of good taste. Senator Kefauver presented for his examination the cover of an issue of *Crime SuspenStories* (drawn by Johnny Craig) which shows a man holding by its long blond hair the severed head of a woman. In the man's other hand is the dripping ax with which he has just carried out the decapitation, and the lower part of the woman's body, with the skirt well up on the plump thighs, appears in the background. It was an illustration for the story I have described in which the murderer is finally trapped on a television program. Did Mr. Gaines think this cover in good taste? Yes, he did—for a horror comic. If the head had been held a little higher, so as to show blood dripping from the severed neck, that would have been bad taste. Mr. Gaines went on to say that he considers himself to be the originator of horror comics and is proud of it. He mentioned also that he is a graduate of the New York University School of Education, qualified to teach in the high schools.

I did not fail to clip the report of Mr. Gaines's testimony from the *Times* and send it to Paul, together with a note in which I said that while I was in some confusion about the comic-book question, at least I was sure I did not see what Mr. Gaines had to be so proud about. But Paul has learned a few things

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in the course of the running argument about comic books that has gone on between us. He thanked me for sending the clipping and declined to be drawn into a discussion. Such discussions have not proved very fruitful for him in the past.

THEY have not been very fruitful for me either. I know that I don't like the comics myself and that it makes me uncomfortable to see Paul reading them. But it's hard to explain to Paul why I feel this way, and somewhere along the line it seems to have been established that Paul is always entitled to an explanation: he is a child of our time.

I said once that the gross and continual violence of the comic books was objectionable.

He said: "What's so terrible about things being exciting?"

Well, nothing really; but there are books that are much more exciting, and the comics keep you from reading the books.

But I read books *too*. (He does, especially when there are no comics available.)

Why read the comics at all?

But you said yourself that *Mad* is pretty good. You gotta admit!

Yes, I know I did. But it's not that good. . . . Oh, the comics are just stupid, that's all, and I don't see why you should be wasting so much time with them.

Maybe they're stupid *sometimes*. But look at this one. This one is *really good*. Just read it! Why won't you just *read* it?

Usually I refuse to "just read it," but that puts me at once at a disadvantage. How can I condemn something without knowing what it is? And sometimes, when I do read it, I am forced to grant that maybe this particular story does have a certain minimal distinction, and then I'm lost. Didn't I say myself that *Mad* is pretty good?

I suppose this kind of discussion can be carried on better than I seem able to do, but it's a bad business getting into discussions anyway. If you're against comic books, then you say: no comic books. I understand there are parents who manage to do that. The best—or worst—that has happened to Paul was a limit on the number of comic books he was allowed to have in a week: I think it was three. But that was intolerable; there were special occasions, efforts to borrow against next week, negotiations for revision of the allotment; there was *always* a discussion.

THE fundamental difficulty, in a way—the thing that leaves both Paul and me uncertain of our ground—is that the comics obviously do not constitute a serious problem in his life. He is in that Fan-Addict Club, all right, and he likes to make a big show of being interested in E.C. comics above all else that the world has to offer, but he and I both know that while he may be a fan, he is not an addict. His life at school is pretty busy (this has been his first year at school away from home) and comics are not encouraged, though they certainly do find their way in. Paul subscribes to *Mad* and, I think, *Pogo* (also to *Zoo Funnies* and *Atomic Mouse*, but he doesn't read those any more), and he is still inclined to haunt the newsstands when he is in New York; indeed, the first thing he wants to do when he gets off the train is buy a comic. In spite of all obstacles, I suppose he manages to read a hundred in a year, at worst perhaps even a hundred and fifty—that would take maybe seventy-five to a hundred hours. On the other hand, he doesn't see much television or listen much to the radio, and he does read books, draw, paint, play with toads, look at things through a microscope, write stories and poems, imitate Jerry Lewis, and in general do everything that one could reasonably want him to do, plus a few extras like skiing and riding. He seems to me a more alert, skillful, and self-possessed child than I or any of my friends were at eleven, if that's any measure.

Moreover, I can't see that his hundred or hundred and fifty comic books are having any very specific effects on him. The bloodiest of ax murders apparently does not disturb his sleep or increase the violence of his own impulses. *Mad* and *Panic* have helped to develop in him a style of humor which may occasionally be wearing but is in general pretty successful; and anyway, Jerry Lewis has had as much to do with this as the comics. Paul's writing is highly melodramatic, but that's only to be expected, and he is more likely to model himself on Erle Stanley Gardner or Wilkie Collins than on *Crime SuspenStories*. Sometimes the melodrama goes over the line into the gruesome, and in that the comic books no doubt play a role; but if there were no comic books, Paul would be reading things like "The Pit and the Pendulum" or *The Narrative of A. Gordon Pym*—which, to be sure, would be better. Now and then he has expressed a desire to be a comic-book artist when he grows up, or a television comedian. So far as I can judge, he has no inclination to ac-

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cept as real the comic-book conception of human nature which sees everyone as a potential criminal and every criminal as an absolute criminal.*

As you see, I really don't have much reason to complain; that's why Paul wins the arguments. But of course I complain anyway. I don't like the comic books—not even *Mad*, whatever I may have unguardedly allowed myself to say—and I would prefer it if Paul did not read them. Like most middle-class parents, I devote a good deal of over-anxious attention to his education, to the "influences" that play on him and the "problems" that arise for him. Almost anything in his life is likely to seem important to me, and I find it hard to accept the idea that there should be one area of his experience, apparently of considerable importance to him, which will have no important consequences. One comic book a week or ten, they *must* have an effect. How can I be expected to believe that it will be a good one?

TESTIFYING in opposition to Mr. Gaines at the Congressional hearing was Dr. Fredric Wertham, a psychiatrist who has specialized in work with problem and delinquent children. Dr. Wertham has been studying and attacking the comic books for a number of years. His position on the question is now presented in full in his recently published book *Seduction of the Innocent.*

The most impressive part of the book is its illustrations: two dozen or so examples of comic-book art displaying the outer limits of that "good taste" which Mr. Gaines suggests might be a sufficient restraint upon the editors. There is a picture of a baseball game in which the ball is a man's head with one eye dangling from its socket, the bat is a severed leg, the catcher wears a dismembered human torso as chest protector, the baselines are marked with stretched-out intestines, the bases are marked with the lungs, liver, and heart, the rosin-bag is the dead man's stomach, and the umpire dusts off home plate with the scalp. There is a close-up of a hanged man, tongue protruding, eyeballs turned back, the break in the neck clearly drawn. Another scene shows two men being dragged to death face down over a rocky road. "A couple more miles oughta do th' trick!" says the driver of the car. "It better," says his companion. "These ****!! GRAVEL ROADS are tough on tires!" "But you gotta admit," replies the driver, "there's nothing like 'em for ERASING FACES!" And so on. Dr. Wertham could surely have presented many more such examples if he had the space and could have obtained permission to reproduce them. From Paul's collection, I recall with special uneasiness a story in which a rotting corpse returns from the grave; in full color, the hues and contours of decay were something to see.

Among the recurrent motifs of the comic books, Dr. Wertham lists: hanging, flagellation, rape, torture of women, tying up of women, injury to the eye (one of the pictures he reproduces shows a horrifying close-up of a woman's eye about to be pierced by an ice-pick). If a child reads ten comics of this sort a week (a not unusual figure), he may absorb in the course of a year from fifteen hundred to two thousand stories emphasizing these themes (a comic book contains three or four stories). If he takes them with any seriousness at all—and it is difficult to believe that he will not—they surely cannot fail to affect his developing attitudes towards violence, sex, and social restraint.

WHAT the effects will be, and how deep-seated, is not so easy to determine. And here Dr. Wertham is not very helpful. When he tells us of children who have been found hanging, with a comic-book nearby opened to a picture of a hanging, one can readily share

*The assumption that human beings will always follow out the logic of their character to the limit is one of the worst elements in the comic books, and is pretty widespread in them. If a man is a burglar, he will not hesitate to commit murder; and if he is going to commit murder, he is often as likely to think of boiling his victim in oil as of shooting him. In the radio serial *Mark Trail*, a program no longer in existence which was based on the comic strip *Mark Trail*, men engaged in such illegal activities as hunting beaver out of season would unhesitatingly shoot any game warden who came upon them. (The theme of the program was supposed to be conservation.) This kind of "logic" may seem very proper to children. When Paul was about four or five, a baby-sitter read him the story of Bluebeard. I was a little disturbed when he mentioned this to me the next morning and I tried to probe his reactions.

I said something like: "An exciting story, eh?"

"Oh, yes," said Paul.

"That Bluebeard was quite a nasty character, wasn't he?" I said.

"Oh, I don't know," said Paul.

"What do you mean you don't know? Didn't he try to murder his wife?"

"Well," said Paul, "he *told* her not to look in that closet."

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his alarm. The fact that these children were probably seriously disturbed before they ever read a comic book, and the fact that fantasies of hanging are in any case common among children, does not relieve one of the feeling that comic books may have provided the immediate stimulus that led to these deaths. Even if there were no children who actually hanged themselves, is it conceivable that comic books which play so directly and so graphically on their deepest anxieties should be without evil consequences? On the other hand, when Dr. Wertham tells us of children who have injured themselves trying to fly because they have read *Superman* or *Captain Marvel,* one becomes skeptical. Children always want to fly and are always likely to try it. The elimination of *Superman* will not eliminate this sort of incident. Like many other children, I made my own attempt to fly after seeing *Peter Pan;* as I recall, I didn't really expect it to work, but I thought: who knows?

In general, Dr. Wertham pursues his argument with a humorless dedication that tends to put all phenomena and all evidence on the same level. Discussing *Superman,* he suggests that it wouldn't take much to change the "S" on that great chest to "S.S." With a straight face he tells us of a little boy who was asked what he wanted to be when he grew up and said, "I want to be a sex maniac!" He objects to advertisements for binoculars in comic books because a city child can have nothing to do with binoculars except to spy on the neighbors. He reports the case of a boy of twelve who had misbehaved with his sister and threatened to break her arm if she told anybody. "This is not the kind of thing that boys used to tell their little sisters," Dr. Wertham informs us. He quotes a sociologist who "analyzed" ten comic-book heroes of the Superman type and found that all of them "may well be designated as psychopathic deviates." As an indication that there are some children "who are influenced in the right direction by thoughtful parents," he tells us of the four-year-old son of one of his associates who was in the hospital with scarlet fever; when the nurses offered him some comic books, the worthy child refused them, "explaining . . . that his father had said they are not good for children." Dr. Wertham will take at face value anything a child tells him, either as evidence of the harmful effects of the comic books ("I think sex all boils down to anxiety," one boy told him; where could he have got such an idea except from the comics?) or as direct support for his own views: he quotes approvingly a letter by a thirteen-year-old boy taking solemn exception to the display of nudity in comic books, and a fourteen-year-old boy's analysis of the economic motives which lead psychiatrists to give their endorsements to comic books. I suspect it would be a dull child indeed who could go to Dr. Wertham's clinic and not discover very quickly that most of his problematical behavior can be explained in terms of the comic books.

The publishers complain with justice that Dr. Wertham makes no distinction between bad comic books and "good" ones. The Dell Publishing Company, for instance, the largest of the publishers, claims to have no objectionable comics on its list, which runs to titles like *Donald Duck* and *The Lone Ranger.* National Comics Publications (*Superman,* etc.), which runs second to Dell, likewise claims to avoid objectionable material and has an "editorial code" which specifically forbids the grosser forms of violence or any undue emphasis on sex. (If anything, this "code" is too puritanical, but mechanically fabricated culture can only be held in check by mechanical restrictions.) Dr. Wertham is largely able to ignore the distinction between bad and "good" because most of us find it hard to conceive of what a "good" comic book might be.*

Yet in terms of their effect on children, there must be a significant difference between *The Lone Ranger* or *Superman* or *Sergeant Preston of the Yukon* on the one hand and, say, the comic book from which Dr. Wertham took that picture of a baseball game played with the disconnected parts of a human body. If *The Lone Ranger* and *Superman* are bad, they are bad in a different way and on a different level. They are crude, unimaginative, banal, vulgar, ultimately corrupting. They are also, as Dr. Wertham claims, violent—but always within certain limits. Perhaps the worst thing they do is to meet the juvenile imagination on its crudest level and offer it an immediate and stereotyped satisfaction. That may be bad enough, but very much the same things could be said of much of our radio and television entertain-

*I leave out of consideration a few comics like *Pogo Possum* and *Dennis the Menace* which I think could be called good without quotation marks, though it is possible Dr. Wertham might find grounds for objection to these also.

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ment and many of our mass-circulation magazines. The objection to the more unrestrained horror and crime comics must be a different one. It is even possible that these outrageous productions may be in one sense "better" than *The Lone Ranger* or *Sergeant Preston,* for in their absolute lack of restraint they tend to be somewhat livelier and more imaginative; certainly they are often less boring. But that does not make them any less objectionable as reading matter for children. Quite the contrary, in fact: *Superman* and *Donald Duck* and *The Lone Ranger* are stultifying; *Crime SuspenStories* and *The Vault of Horror* are stimulating.

A few years ago I heard Dr. Wertham debate with Al Capp on the radio. Mr. Capp at that time had introduced into *Li'l Abner* the story of the shmoos, agreeable little animals of 100 per cent utility who would fall down dead in an ecstasy of joy if one merely looked at them hungrily. All the parts of a shmoo's body, except the eyes, were edible, tasting variously like porterhouse steak, butter, turkey, probably even chocolate cake; and the eyes were useful as suspender buttons. Mr. Capp's fantasy was in this—as, I think, in most of his work—mechanical and rather tasteless. But Dr. Wertham was not content to say anything like that. For him, the story of the shmoos was an incitement to sadistic violence comparable to anything else he had discovered in his reading of comics. He was especially disturbed by the use of the shmoo's eyes as suspender buttons, something he took to be merely another repetition of that motif of injury to the eye which is exemplified in his present book by the picture of a woman about to be blinded with an ice-pick. In the violence of Dr. Wertham's discourse on this subject one got a glimpse of his limitations as an investigator of social phenomena.

For the fact is that Dr. Wertham's picture of society and human nature is one that a reader of comic books—at any rate, let us say, a reader of the "good" comic books—might not find entirely unfamiliar. Dr. Wertham's world, like the world of the comic books, is one where the logic of personal interest is inexorable, and *Seduction of the Innocent* is a kind of crime comic book for parents, as its lurid title alone would lead one to expect. There is the same simple conception of motives, the same sense of overhanging doom, the same melodramatic emphasis on pathology, the same direct and immediate relation between cause and effect. If a juvenile criminal is found in possession of comic books, the comic books produced the crime. If a publisher of comic books, alarmed by attacks on the industry, retains a psychiatrist to advise him on suitable content for his publications, it follows *necessarily* that the arrangement is a dishonest one. If a psychiatrist accepts a fee of perhaps $150 a month for carrying out such an assignment (to judge by what Dr. Wertham himself tells us, the fees are not particularly high), that psychiatrist has been "bought"; it is of no consequence to point out how easily a psychiatrist can make $150. It is therefore all right to appeal to the authority of a sociologist who has "analyzed" Superman "according to criteria worked out by the psychologist Gordon W. Allport" and has found him to be a "psychopathic deviate," but no authority whatever can be attached to the "bought" psychiatrist who has been professionally engaged in the problem of comic books. If no comic-book publisher has been prosecuted under the laws against contributing to the delinquency of minors, it cannot be because those laws may not be applicable; it must be because "no district attorney, no judge, no complainant, has ever had the courage to make a complaint."

Dr. Wertham also exhibits a moral confusion which, even if it does not correspond exactly to anything in the comic books, one can still hope will not gain a footing among children. Comic-book writers and artists working for the more irresponsible publishers have told Dr. Wertham of receiving instructions to put more violence, more blood, and more sex into their work, and of how reluctantly they have carried out these instructions. Dr. Wertham writes: "Crime-comic-book writers should not be blamed for comic books. They are not free men. They are told what to do and they do it—or else. They often are, I have found, very critical of comics. . . . But of course . . . they have to be afraid of the ruthless economic power of the comic-book industry. In every letter I have received from a writer, stress is laid on requests to keep his identity secret." What can Dr. Wertham mean by that ominous "or else" which explains everything and pardons everything? Will the recalcitrant writer be dragged face down over a rocky road? Surely not. What Dr. Wertham means is simply that the man might lose his job and be forced to find less lucrative employment. This economic motive is a sufficient excuse for the man who thought up that gruesome baseball

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game—I suppose because he is a "worker." But it is no excuse for a psychiatrist who advises the publishers of *Superman* and sees to it that no dismembered bodies are played with in that comic book. And of course it is no excuse for a publisher—he is "the industry." This monolithic concept of "the industry" is what makes it pointless to discover whether there is any difference between one publisher and another; it was not men who produced that baseball game—it was "the industry." Would Dr. Wertham suggest to the children who come to his clinic that they cannot be held responsible for anything they do so long as they are doing it to make a living? I am sure he would not. But he does quote with the greatest respect the words of that intelligent fourteen-year-old who was able to see so clearly that if a psychiatrist receives a fee, one can obviously not expect that he will continue to act honestly. And it is not too hard to surmise where this young student of society got the idea.

Apparently, also, when you are fighting a "ruthless industry" you are under no obligation to be invariably careful about what you say. Dr. Wertham very properly makes fun of the psychiatric defenders of comic books who consider it a sufficient justification of anything to say that it satisfies a "deep" need of a child. But on his side of the argument he is willing to put forward some equally questionable "deep" analysis of his own, most notably in his discussion of the supposedly equivocal relation between Batman and the young boy Robin; this particular analysis seems to me a piece of utter frivolity. He is also willing to create the impression that all comic books are on the level of the worst of them, and that psychiatrists have endorsed even such horrors as the piercing of women's eyes and the whimsical dismemberment of bodies. (In fact, the function performed by the reputable psychiatrists who have acted as advisers to the publishers has been to suggest what kind of comic books would be "healthy" reading for children. One can disagree with their idea of what is "healthy," as Dr. Wertham does, or one can be troubled, as I am, at the addition of this new element of fabrication to cultural objects already so mechanical; but there is no justification for implying that these psychiatrists have been acting dishonestly or irresponsibly.)

None of this, however, can entirely destroy Dr. Wertham's case. It remains true that there is something questionable in the tendency of psychiatrists to place such stress on the supposed psychological needs of children as to encourage the spread of material which is at best subversive of the same children's literacy, sensitivity, and general cultivation. *Superman* and *The Three Musketeers* may serve the same psychological needs, but it still matters whether a child reads one or the other. We are left also with the underworld of publishing which produced that baseball game, which I don't suppose I shall easily forget, and with Mr. Gaines's notions of good taste, with the children who have hanged themselves, and with the advertisements for switch-blade knives, pellet guns, and breast developers which accompany the sadistic and erotic stimulations of the worst comic books.* We are left above all with the fact that for many thousands of children comic books, whether bad or "good," represent virtually their only contact with culture. There are children in the schools of our large cities who carry knives and sometimes guns. There are children who reach the last year of high school without ever reading a single book. Even leaving aside the increase in juvenile crime, there seem to be larger numbers of children than ever before who, without going over the line into criminality, live almost entirely in a juvenile underground largely out of touch with the demands of social responsibility, culture, and personal refinement, and who grow up into an unhappy isolation where they are sustained by little else but the routine of the working day, the unceasing clamor of television and the juke boxes, and still, in their adult years, the comic books. This is a very fundamental problem; to blame the comic books, as Dr. Wertham does, is simple-minded. But to say that the comics do

*An advertisement on the back cover of recent issues of *Panic* and *Weird Science-Fantasy* strikes a loftier note:

BOYS, GIRLS, MEN, WOMEN!
The World Is On FIRE
Serve The LORD
and You Can Have These PRIZES!

We will send you the wonderful prizes pictured on this page . . . all WITHOUT ONE PENNY OF COST. Crime, sin, graft, wars are the greatest they have ever been. Our leaders say a reawakening of Christianity is needed to save us. You can do your share by spreading the gospel into every house in your community. Merely show your friends and neighbors inspiring, beautiful Religious Wall Motto plaques. Many buy six or more . . . only 35¢ . . . sell on sight. . . . Serve the LORD and earn prizes you want.

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not contribute to the situation would be like denying the importance of the children's classics and the great English and European novels in the development of an educated man.

The problem of regulation or even suppression of the comic books, however, is a great deal more difficult than Dr. Wertham imagines. If the publication of comic books were forbidden, surely something on an equally low level would appear to take their place. Children do need some "sinful" world of their own to which they can retreat from the demands of the adult world; as we sweep away one juvenile dung heap, they will move on to another. The point is to see that the dung heap does not swallow them up, and to hope it may be one that will bring forth blossoms. But our power is limited; it is the children who have the initiative: they will choose what they want. In any case, it is not likely that the level of literacy and culture would be significantly raised if the children simply turned their attention more exclusively to television and the love, crime, and movie magazines. Dr. Wertham, to be sure, seems quite ready to carry his fight into these areas as well; ultimately, one suspects, he would like to see our culture entirely hygienic. I cannot agree with this tendency. I myself would not like to live surrounded by the kind of culture Dr. Wertham could thoroughly approve of, and what I would not like for myself I would hardly desire for Paul. The children must take their chances like the rest of us. But when Dr. Wertham is dealing with the worst of the comic books he is on strong ground; some kind of regulation seems necessary—indeed, the more respectable publishers of comic books might reasonably welcome it—and I think one must accept Dr. Wertham's contention that no real problem of "freedom of expression" is involved, except that it may be difficult to frame a law that would not open the way to a wider censorship.

All this has taken me a long way from Paul, who doesn't carry a switch-blade knife and has so far been dissuaded even from subscribing to Charles Atlas's body-building course. Paul only clutches at his chest now and then, says something like "arrgh," and drops dead; and he no longer does that very often. Perhaps even Dr. Wertham would not be greatly alarmed about Paul. But I would not say that Paul is not involved in the problem at all. Even if he "needs" *Superman,* I would prefer that he didn't read it. And what he does read is not even *Superman,* which is too juvenile for him; he reads some of the liveliest, bloodiest, and worst material that the "ruthless" comic-book industry has to offer—he is an E.C. Fan-Addict.

I think my position is that I would be happy if Senator Kefauver and Dr. Wertham could find some way to make it impossible for Paul to get *any* comic books. But I'd rather Paul didn't get the idea that I had anything to do with it.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

The Norwalk Incident

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article "Thirty Days That Shook Norwalk" (April), James Rorty did not spare the whip in singling out for criticism all factions involved in the so-called Norwalk incident.

On the whole, however, I believe Mr. Rorty tried to do an objective piece of reporting. None of the disputants, including the VFW, can honestly feel they have won a victory from Rorty's article. In my opinion, the so-called Norwalk incident was a comedy of errors exaggerated out of all proportion, and I think Mr. Rorty has ably pointed this out.

The national organization of the Veterans of Foreign Wars has never advocated or encouraged the formation of secret committees, vigilante tactics, or witch hunts, but rather has advocated compliance with the procedure recommended by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Careful investigation and interrogation of VFW leaders in the Norwalk area disclosed no evidence of a secret committee or any intention on the part of VFW officers and members to engage in vigilante tactics, witch hunting, or the smearing of innocent persons.

I agree with Mr. Rorty that most of the publicity, which did credit to no one and did not benefit the community, could have been avoided if men of good will had sat down together in an effort to clear up misunderstandings.

LELAND P. LOVETTE
Director of Public Relations
Veterans of Foreign Wars
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The practice of coloring facts to influence a conclusion may be marketable among some lawyers, but on a reporter, it does not look so good. In his article "Thirty Days That Shook Norwalk," James Rorty describes what happened after the announced VFW spy hunt as follows: "Quickly the alarm sounded on the liberal front . . . telephones rang, and cocktail parties buzzed."

As a matter of fact, the decision to oppose the VFW was made at a routine meeting of a neighborhood ADA group at which most of the members had not even heard of the VFW committee. The spy hunt was only one of a number of topics discussed at this regular monthly gathering. Needless to say, none of us had any idea that our newspaper ad would generate interest outside of Norwalk.

Mr. Rorty goes on to suggest that ADA was wrong to assume the VFW really had a spy-hunting committee just because the VFW announced it publicly and confirmed it constantly over a period of weeks. We still believe a confession is pretty good evidence. Whether or not a committee did exist (and there is ample evidence to prove it did), allowing witch-hunt announcements to pass unopposed only serves to encourage misdirected vigilante action.

I agree with Mr. Rorty when he suggests there are other ways of combating neighbor-spying besides arousing public condemnation as the ADA did. But anybody acquainted with the glee the VFW felt at the initial publicity of their spy hunt would have realized the impossibility of appealing to them on a civil rights basis. By the time Mr. Rorty appeared on the scene, the VFW spokesmen had done a good bit of sobering up.

I do not blame Mr. Rorty for trying to find a new angle on the overworked Norwalk incident, but I wish he had carried his investigations a little further. It almost seems as if he drove up to Commander Beres's Norwalk gasoline station, filled his tank, and went home.

THOMAS A. GAINES
Stamford, Conn.

MR. RORTY *writes:*

I am afraid Mr. Gaines "colors the facts" a bit when he suggests that I made only one stop in Norwalk. Actually, I spent three days there and in Wilton and Westport, interviewed a dozen people personally and as many more by telephone, and went through the ADA's clip file in the home of Devere Allen. Finally, I interviewed Admiral Lovette, the VFW's national public-relations officer in Washington—something that might, I think, have occurred to the ADA if it was really convinced, apparently without even trying, of "the impossibility of appealing to them [the Norwalk VFW Post] on a civil rights basis."

Incidentally, Mr. Gaines really should re-

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read my article. I didn't blame the ADA for becoming alarmed by the VFW Post's stupid and alarming recruiting publicity. I merely reported local opinion, with which I found myself agreeing, that before squaring off at the VFW in print it might have been well to appeal to the local VFW officers to correct the impression, which their publicity unquestionably conveyed, that they were engaging in activities for which "witch hunt" is the appropriate word, although the VFW doesn't believe in witch hunting and Admiral Lovette assures me that no VFW post has ever practiced it—not even in Norwalk.

Maybe the ADA aborted a spy hunt, but I strongly doubt it. I also doubt that it is sound liberalism to assume that all veterans are congenital witch hunters, impossible to talk to, merely because an occasional post elects a blabber-mouth as commander. Some of my best friends are veterans; in fact I'm one myself, and come to think of it, Mr. Gaines probably is too.

Did Stalin Represent Progress?

To the Editor of Commentary:

In his review of Isaac Deutscher's *Russia, What Next?* (January), Mr. Paul Willen asks: "How could one man be so right and so wrong at the same time?" After reading the review, I am impelled to paraphrase his question—to wit: How could one reviewer be so right and so wrong at the same time?

Mr. Willen regards Deutscher as "one of the very few contemporary analysts of Soviet civilization who have seen the post-Stalin 'convulsions' in the perspective of the general historical development of Soviet Communism, rather than as intra-mural Kremlin intrigue." He may be right about it; perhaps Deutscher is to be credited for at least *trying* to interpret recent Soviet policies from a socio-economic point of view rather than reporting excitedly on the number of Malenkov's portraits currently displayed in Moscow. But Mr. Willen also credits Deutscher with "perspicuity"; and while in the second part of this review he performs a brilliant *tour de force* in examining Deutscher's psychological affinity with Stalinism, he nevertheless maintains that the latter's analysis of "the historical roots of the present crisis of Stalinism" is basically correct.

A careful reading of *Russia, What Next?* will easily disprove Mr. Willen's claim. For it is precisely "the early portions of the book" that illustrate—more glaringly, crudely, and compactly than his massive biography of Stalin—Deutscher's basic approach, namely, a rigid determinism which views history as the working out of inexorable economic forces, and which, in this instance, leads to a dispassionate justification of the Stalinist system. This attitude has much in common with that of Trotsky; indeed, it is rather amusing to note the striking similarity between the ideas of *Russia, What Next?* and those, say, of *The Revolution Betrayed.* Trotsky staunchly defended the Soviet Union on the ground that its economy was "socialist"; he was convinced that Stalinism represented but a passing phase, a "transition from capitalism to socialism." So does Deutscher hold that Stalinism established "the framework for a socialist society." But whereas Trotsky maintained that Stalinism could have been averted, Deutscher states unequivocally that it could not. The "Stalin epoch" was barbarous yet inevitable and necessary; above all, it was "one of unprecedented economic and social progress." Having served a useful function, having caused the people of Russia "to come of age politically and culturally," it has now become anachronistic and must therefore vanish from the historical arena. There is an organic unity between the first part of Deutscher's book, which Mr. Willen praises, and the second, which he assails: for it is his analysis of "the historical roots of the present crisis of Stalinism" that leads Deutscher to conclude that "the balance of domestic factors favors a democratic regeneration of the regime."

A few examples must suffice to demonstrate Deutscher's glib defense of Stalinism in the name of "historical necessity." On pp. 24-25, Deutscher represents Lenin's terror-system as having been directed simply against "those who strove, arms in hand, to restore the pre-revolutionary order." As for the socialist parties on the right, they "forfeited most or nearly all of their support among the working classes." Apparently sharing Lenin's disdain for the "petty-bourgeois" peasantry, Deutscher neglects to take into account the formidable strength of the Social Revolutionaries, who drew nearly two-thirds of all the votes cast in the elections to the Constituent Assembly which met on January 18, 1918, and was dissolved by the Bolsheviks the following day. Deutscher's acceptance of the "necessity" of forced industrialization—in fact, his infatuation with it—automatically rules out any consideration of other alternatives that presented themselves to the Soviet leadership in the 1920's; nor does he pause to wonder whether the industrial and military progress achieved under Stalin was worth the enormous cost in human pain and suffering. It is therefore not surprising to find him justifying Stalinist inequality—"it was in the national interest that the government should foster a privileged minority consisting of administrators, planners,

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engineers, and skilled workers" (p. 127); and terror—"the government had identified itself with a great national cause. . . . This identification, in the last instance [!], accounted for the helplessness of the Soviet people against the terror" (p. 123); or evincing an uncanny insight into the deeper recesses of Stalin's mind: "During a quarter of a century Stalinism, without compunction or pity, *and yet with some suppressed compassion*, drove a nation of 160 to 200 millions to jump the chasm which separated the epoch of the wooden plow from that of the atomic pile" (p. 89—italics mine). Since Stalinism, despite its iniquities, spells progress, it follows that the Soviet working class, in spite of its having been "severely regimented, disciplined, and directed," is "essentially a normal working class" (p. 72). It follows, too, that "the bulk of the peasantry has somehow adjusted itself to the collectivist framework of its existence" (p. 78), and that it most probably is not "hankering to return to small-scale private farming" (p. 84)—all evidence to the contrary notwithstanding.

DEUTSCHER depicts Stalinism as a unique blend of Marxism, Greek Orthodoxy, and—quintessentially—"primitive magic," i.e., the expression of "man's helplessness amid the forces of nature he had not yet learned to control" (p. 56). More concretely, Stalin is shown as a product of his native Georgia, its "tribal way of life . . . its totems and taboos" (p. 57). . . . "The fear instilled in Soviet citizens of contamination by contact with the West has been in its violence and irrationality reminiscent of the taboo—it suggests the savage dread of incest" (p. 61). . . . Despite this primitivism, however—or, more accurately, *because* of it, Stalin was able to "drive" the nation towards "socialism"; and having succeeded, having accomplished "unprecedented economic and social progress," it is now compelled to shed its savage mantle. For "how," Deutscher reflects, "could the primitive magic of Stalinism 'coexist' with modern knowledge and Marxist theories in the minds of millions?" (p. 135). The answer to this delightfully "loaded" question is, of course: it cannot. In fact, so convinced is Deutscher of the historical incongruity of Stalinism, that he accepts the Soviet amnesty and promise to revise the criminal code at face value—though the evidence argues against so optimistic an evaluation (p. 172). And so eager is he to interpret some of the more dramatic reversals that followed Stalin's death in the light of his theories, that he actually falsifies history by asserting that the repudiation of the so-called "doctors' plot" constituted the first public exposure of forced confessions. Whatever the real meaning of this reversal, it is difficult to believe that Deutscher is unaware of the several trials, held in 1939 and widely reported in the Soviet as well as world press, in which officials of the NKVD were accused of having extorted false confessions of "counter-revolutionary" and "fascist" activity from innocent Soviet citizens, some of them under the age of fourteen. . . .

Time alone will tell whether Deutscher's *predictions* are—as Mr. Willen thinks, and I heartily agree—so much "wishful thinking," or essentially correct. . . . But there is little doubt that the "early portions" of *Russia, What Next?* far from revealing "perspicuity," constitute the most refined apologia for Stalinist totalitarianism.

ABRAHAM BRUMBERG

Washington, D.C.

Psychoanalysis and Faith

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

It is unfortunate that Lillian Blumberg McCall chose to use her review of Dr. C. P. Oberndorf's *History of Psychoanalysis in America* (April) as an occasion for petty self-pleading and captious criticism of psychoanalysis in general. In projecting her personal dissatisfaction with the results of psychoanalysis onto "anyone who has ever been analyzed" she reveals her bankruptcy as a serious critic.

Every psychoanalyst knows, and will unhesitatingly state, that there are many patients who like Mrs. McCall terminate analysis with the feeling of being "the same old you." But every analyst and every analytically-oriented psychiatrist can point to many others who have emerged with quite different feelings, and whose change from "the old you" can be attested to not only by themselves but by those around them. That there are not more such is unfortunate, and indicates the existence of unresolved theoretical and practical problems. These problems will not be solved by imputations to analysts—medical analysts, of course—of motives of greed, dishonesty, and opportunism.

In her orthodox unorthodoxy Mrs. McCall casually dismisses certain technical rules of psychoanalysis as "matters of custom." It does not seem to have occurred to her that the value of these "matters of custom" may have been repeatedly verified by empirical means, or that in cavalierly discarding them the "non-orthodox schools" may have thrown out the baby with the bath. The distinction between flexibility and doctrinaire anti-Freudianism seems to have escaped her.

Mrs. McCall is, of course, correct in her frivolous observation that there is no present

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evidence to prove that "five times a week is five times better than once a week." Mrs. McCall knows perfectly well that quantifications of this kind are impossible of achievement. Most psychiatrists will agree, however, that the degree of therapeutic success varies distinctly, if not directly, with the frequency of sessions in most cases even when non-analytic techniques are used. If five times a week were only one and a half times as good as once a week, and the one-half were to mean the difference between success and failure, might it not then be justified?

The problem posed by Mrs. McCall's review does not lie in her offhand attacks on particular "schools" or particular technical procedures. The problem is that of an irresponsible, personally motivated attack on a major scientific discipline which is itself making serious efforts to improve its techniques of self-observation and research methodology (see the recent work of Kubie, Escalona, Glover, *et al.*). The case for psychoanalysis does not rest on "five times a week" or on the use or non-use of "the couch." It rests on its incalculable contributions to the understanding of human behavior and its readily verifiable benefit to increasing numbers of patients who, even when treated by non-analysts, are the beneficiaries of the contributions of psychoanalysis to all modern psychiatric and psychological thought.

Dr. Oberndorf is indeed a man of candor, and his scientific skepticism and his demands for flexibility and constant self-criticism on the part of analysts have earned for him his place of honor in his profession. He has been ill served by Mrs. McCall's embittered and patronizing review.

AARON H. ESMAN (M.D.)
Takoma Park, Md.

MRS. MCCALL *writes:*

I'm getting tired of the heads-I-win-tails-you-lose character of the Freudian attacks on me. The last time I wrote about psychoanalysis I didn't mention that I'd been psychoanalyzed. It didn't seem relevant because I was discussing the evidence of its clinical effectiveness *as presented in the literature.* It wasn't then and isn't now my fault that there is no evidence that the therapy works. However, because I didn't mention that I'd been analyzed, my critics assumed that I hadn't been and I received several nasty letters to the effect that anyone who hadn't been analyzed was not competent to discuss the sacred subject. This time I confessed and what happens? I'm incompetent because I *have* been analyzed and take a dim view of the therapeutic effectiveness of psychoanalysis out of motives of personal revenge. As a matter of fact I am, after twelve years, still fond of my analyst. Why must psychoanalysts attack their critics instead of the arguments? Are we to assume that their failures are so many that they have become oversensitive? The business of personal motivation is a double-edged sword; psychoanalysts are not immune to the usual human frailties. They have been known to go mad and to commit suicide. I can only say, "Physician, heal thyself!" In any case, a "major scientific discipline" is suspect when it treats criticism as heresy. . . .

Dr. Esman doesn't accuse me of error. He just thinks it is indelicate to discuss publicly what every psychoanalyst knows—that the system doesn't work in practice as it is supposed to in theory. It is certainly something to consider if, as Dr. Esman says, "many patients" terminate treatment with the feeling that it has been a failure. How many? One out of ten? Five out of ten? Nine out of ten? Dr. Esman doesn't say, but it doesn't strike me that the question is "frivolous." I agree that psychoanalysis poses many unsolved theoretical and practical problems. Should patients be asked to pay $75 and up a week for several years while the psychoanalysts try to solve problems that as far as they or anybody else can tell may be insoluble? If it is any comfort to Dr. Esman, I think that the only virtues possessed by the non-orthodox schools are negative: they are less expensive and time-consuming. Nobody has shown that they are less or more effective than the classical procedure. Dr. Esman is talking through his hat when he says that the technical rules of the orthodox procedure have been "repeatedly verified by empirical means." Let him cite the evidence. "Most psychiatrists," he says, "will agree, however, that the degree of therapeutic success varies distinctly, if not directly, with the frequency of sessions in most cases. . . ." I'd like to be around when two psychiatrists agree on anything. As Dr. Oberndorf pointed out, psychiatrists don't agree on diagnosis, the purpose of the therapy, when to terminate it, or its results. Stekel, for one, believed that the degree of success could vary *inversely* with the length of treatment and frequency of sessions.

The "incalculable contributions" of psychoanalysis "to the understanding of human behavior" are exactly that—incalculable. If its benefits are so readily verified how come they have yet to be verified? The fact that some people think the therapy has helped them doesn't constitute proof of its effectiveness. Some people swear by chiropractic but that doesn't make chiropractic "a major scientific discipline." It only means—as any general practitioner can tell you—that faith is a powerful therapeutic factor.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

The Web of Realism

THE WEB OF SUBVERSION: UNDERGROUND NETWORKS IN THE U. S. GOVERNMENT. By JAMES BURNHAM. John Day. 248 pp. $3.75.

Reviewed by IRVING KRISTOL

A FEW years back, the French periodical *Crapouillot* issued a special number devoted to *La Farce des Services Secrets*, which rambled through the underground of history with a jaundiced eye and frivolous pen. It made very funny reading: how, for instance, before the First World War, the French and German High Commands had succeeded in stealing each other's most secret military plans, but could never make their minds up whether each knew that the other knew, and if he knew, whether he would change his plans or stick to them because the other expected him to change them, etc., etc.—just like the convolutions of self-consciousness in a novel by Henry James. Those were the good old days, when British firms built German warships, when spies worked for money, glamor, and the simple hell of it (and not infrequently for both sides); and when the stakes, though high, were somewhat less than the future of civilization.

That era ended with the Bolshevik Revolution and the rise of world Communism. Instead of the glamorous and gay Mata Hari we have the grim *tricoteuse* Ethel Rosenberg. The profession has become overcrowded, and standards have deteriorated. Above all, the business has become too serious.

In inflating espionage in all its dimensions, however, the Soviets have also magnified its stupid and absurd sides. They have wasted valuable talents in the accumulation of economic data they could have got simply by spending a few hundred dollars for subscriptions to the right magazines. They have disbelieved in their own successes—all during the war they received daily from a still unidentified agent in Berlin the complete battle orders of the German army in the East, but it was only after a fantastic delay that they brought themselves to make use of them. In the course of intrigues within the Kremlin, highly successful networks abroad have been shattered to gain a factional advantage at home—the Slansky trial was an incident in such a case. And because of the separate and rival operations conducted in this area by the Red Army, the secret police, and the Soviet Foreign Office, misunderstandings are always taking place—one can easily imagine the Soviet embassy in Washington sending back analyses of the American economy based on United States government surveys tendentiously edited by secret Communists.

But, unfortunately, Soviet espionage is not a silly business of the past, but a serious danger in the present, and it is with its unpleasant successes rather than its ludicrous failures that we, and James Burnham, are concerned.

IN *The Web of Subversion*, Mr. Burnham presents a terse and lucid summary of what has been discovered by various investigating committees about Communist espionage networks in the United States government. Since he knows his subject thoroughly and has a very orderly mind, his book is a useful one; those who wish to get a clear picture of the extent of Communist infiltration of the various government agencies, of the kinds of people these infiltrees are, of the kind of evidence that has been adduced against them, will find *The Web of Subversion* very much to their purpose. None of the material is new, but some items (the case of Arthur Adams, for example) are not so well known as they should be, while others make a fresh impression when collated so carefully. Random bits of information then fall into place, giving off shocks of illumination. Thus, when Mr. Burnham traces the careers in government service of the members of the original Communist cell in the Natonal Research Project, a great deal of what had seemed at the time like

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pointless Senatorial inquisitiveness about promotions, recommendations, etc., finds its justification.

Those who prefer to regard Whittaker Chambers and Elizabeth Bentley as pathological liars, and who believe that to plead the privilege of the Fifth Amendment is the first refuge of a scholar and a gentleman, are not likely to be influenced by Mr. Burnham's book, despite the fact that he has meticulously avoided all sensationalism, and has at times even tried to be persuasive. Such people are incorrigible by now, one supposes; Mr. Burnham is scarcely open to criticism for failing to move them. But he is open to criticism in other respects. For, though *The Web of Subversion* is a good book, there are far too many rough passages in it, when the mind reels and the ground seems to slip beneath one's feet. Moreover, one feels that these are, as Mr. Burnham would say, "no accident," but are inherent to his approach to politics.

Mr. Burnham is a man of many talents, none of them bent particularly in the direction of politics. His mind is that of a scholastic for whom the world is populated by such abstract substances as "power," "vigilant action," and "swift counteraction," which bump into one another like ghostly billiard balls and ricochet into their predetermined pockets. If he is a "realist," it is only in the medieval sense. His reasoning is legalistic, never judicial; strong on first causes, weak on contingent ones—for the study of these latter is a nominalistic art, having to do with unrepeatable singularities. When his emotions are stirred, his "realism" becomes a form of political romanticism. The genuine philosophers of *Realpolitik*—Burke, Madison, Bagehot—do not interest him; he prefers the doctrinaire type of Machiavelli and Sorel, who might have passed their days in a monastery for all they knew of the affairs of men.

Here are two specimens of Mr. Burnham's unworldliness:

(1) On the question of Communist infiltration of the armed services, he remarks:

"No systematic public enquiry has ever been made concerning military infiltration. We can be certain only that the armed forces and their technical auxiliaries have been—and still are—heavily penetrated. . . . Earl Browder, while he was secretary of the Party during the war, said publicly that the Party had more than 13,000 members, including officers, in the armed forces. . . . Every Communist, unless he is assigned to the most extreme secret work, is a propagandist and recruiting agent. Moreover, the influence of disciplined Communists in the armed forces, as elsewhere, is dynamic, and far greater than it appears on mere arithmetic comparisons."

So the Communists who, like everyone else, were drafted into the armed forces, were really engaged in mass infiltration. . . . Mr. Burnham has a most innocent vision of military life; he may even think that soldiers talk politics in their idle moments. It is true, of course, that after the war a few dozen Communists got important positions in military government in Germany and Japan and were able to do some very useful work, from their point of view. We should like to learn about them, but we do not, because Mr. Burnham is too hypnotized by the spectacle of Mr. Browder's 13,000 subversive stalwarts sweeping their barracks, peeling potatoes, rotting away in reinforcement depots, or actually daring to shoot at (enemy) non-Communists.

(2) Where the ordinary man tends to look at politics in a limited perspective, establishing the connections among things in a crude and sensible way, Mr. Burnham prefers to sight along an infinite series. As in this sentence: "Every trial and every investigation dealing with specific members of the underground have led to the conclusion that those members were linked to an *indefinite* number of others still undetected." The italics are *not* Mr. Burnham's, for if attention is called to the word, one realizes at once how strange a choice it represents. An "indefinite" number is, in common usage, certainly a large number, and probably a very large one. An "undetermined" number, on the other hand—well, that's simply a number one doesn't know. Mr. Burnham doesn't know the number, or even whether it is large or small. But he obviously would prefer to have it large, for if it were small he would have to count, and that is a menial task for a political philosopher.

A final word on an unpalatable but urgent issue: McCarthy. In a passing reference, Mr. Burnham asserts that the Senator has "uncovered" a secret espionage cell that "has operated, and may still be operating" at Fort Monmouth. He gives no evidence for this claim, leaving one to assume that he has deduced it from—if one may say so—underground premises.

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Unhappy South Africa

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAY OF LIFE. Edited by G. H. CALPIN. Columbia University Press. 200 pp. $3.50.

THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA. By SARAH GERTRUDE MILLIN. Knopf. 337 pp. $4.50.

Reviewed by DAN JACOBSON

AT FIRST sight the editor of *The South African Way of Life* would seem to have taken on a self-defeating task. The book is a companion volume to a series of similar volumes on the French, British, and Australian ways of life, with others, presumably, to follow. But South Africa being what it is, the editor had no choice but to ask an English-speaking South African to write on the English-speaking South Africans, an Afrikaans South African to write on the Afrikaans South Africans, an African to write on the Africans, and so on, through the six racial groupings which the book surveys.

The first six chapters are devoted to the articles thus produced. They differ considerably in tone and style, which was inevitable; and they differ too in the audiences at which they seem to have been aimed. For instance, Mr. Ronald Currey, writing on the English-speaking South Africans, calls upon these people to show, among other qualities, patience and courage and self-discipline and "a single-hearted devotion to all that is universal in the tradition they have inherited," in face of the fact that they have recently found themselves to be a minority rapidly declining in power before an unfriendly Afrikaner nationalism. One cannot help feeling that this is asking a great deal from any people—let alone from English-speaking South Africans who have never particularly distinguished themselves by either virtue or viciousness. But the other contributors seem to have assumed that the book was primarily intended for distribution outside South Africa, and so have written explaining, as it were, themselves to the outside world. By indulging in unnecessarily exalted verbiage, Dr. S. J. du Toit badly muffs a chance to explain to this world how it happened that a few Dutch settlers who had grown to meager nationhood at the time of the two Boer republics, and were then smashed by the British in the Boer War, yet managed, fifty years later, to become the

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divided country's dominant political group.

An unfriendly comment would be that it is precisely Dr. du Toit's exaltation of language which provides the explanation, and the fervid utterances of many Afrikaner nationalists lend support to such a comment; but there is more to *Afrikanerdom* than grandiose utterances gaining credence in the minds of the people who utter them. The existence of the Afrikaner nation is a historical curiosity: they are, as Mr. David Marquard points out later in this book, one of the very few "colonial" communities where a small European settlement has faced a large aboriginal population, and has retained its identity without destroying its hosts or driving them beyond the borders of the country; they are also a people among whom a dialect of Dutch has become a separate language, and a language with a considerable and in some cases most admirable literature to its credit. These facts are there in Dr. du Toit's article: one can only wish that he had been a little more collected in tone.

THE articles on the other groups are, with the exception of Mrs. Phyllis Lewsen's modest and perceptive article on the Jewish community, rather disappointing. Mrs. Lewsen makes the point that "Jewish responses to the Native problem are characteristically South African. That is to say the great majority believe in segregation and have strong social prejudices against non-Europeans." I think it is fair to say that the fact that the Nationalist party's repeated efforts to win over Jewish voters seem to have met with limited success is due more to the extremely anti-Semitic records of many of that party's leaders than to any particular detestation by Jews of the government's policy towards the non-whites. Since coming into power Dr. Malan has, as Mrs. Lewsen mentions, disclaimed anti-Semitism as a policy, his government has mooted no anti-Semitic legislation, and has expressed great friendship towards the State of Israel, Dr. Malan himself being the first prime minister of any country to visit Israel since the establishment of the state. Mrs. Lewsen states that the Nationalist party in the Transvaal does not allow Jewish members: this is no longer true, the party having rescinded that clause in its constitution some years back. As far as one can judge, in fact, despite the once vociferous anti-Semitism of the Nationalist party, the Jewish community in South Africa today is as secure or insecure as any other white community in South Africa; and the particular problem of group survival that it faces is that of all other Jewish communities outside Israel.

Mr. Calpin, the editor of the book, contributes an article on the Indian community—it is the one community which does not speak for itself—which is adequate but unexciting. Messrs. Golding and Joshua are surprisingly brief on the Colored (mulatto) community. Mr. Selby Negobo contributes an article which is mostly given over, wrongly to my mind, to a general anthropological discussion of the various African tribes. It is interesting to know that the Nguni tribes prohibit parallel and cross-cousin marriage; but the application of that sort of sanction can hardly be mentioned without also mentioning that as a result of the appalling conditions under which the urbanization of the African people is taking place, the illegitimacy rate among the people assembled in the locations and squatter camps around the major European cities rises in some cases to as high as 50 per cent of all births—to give only one example of the breakdown of the tribal social codes and their replacement by what is little short of social anarchy.

The book also contains articles on education in South Africa, the country's political institutions, political parties, and the economic factors in the country's life. *The South African Way of Life* was prepared on the request and with the financial help of UNESCO, and I suspect that some of the book's patchiness is due to the fact that the contributors were on their very best behavior for such an international occasion. There is a South African way of life, but it is an unhappy one, and one that the book underplays. For all these different groups, white, black, Colored, Indian, whether

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they like it or not (and the present government of the Union certainly claims not to like it) live together; and the South African way of life, if it exists at all, exists most markedly in the tensions and strangenesses, the fears and necessary intimacies *between* the groups, and not only in the ways of life within the groups themselves—if one can for the moment make such a distinction. Unfortunately, though the other contributors refer often enough to it, and though the chapter on the country's economy indicates clearly enough why it must continue and grow more intimate, only Dr. Marquard deals directly with that unhappy integration in an epilogue which can be commended for its objectivity and forthrightness.

Mrs. Sarah Gertrude Millin, author of *The People of South Africa,* worked with none of the limitations imposed upon those who contributed to *The South African Way of Life.* She can therefore deal foursquarely with what I have called the characteristically South African way of life in a way that the others could not. Her book is partly a history of South Africa, partly a discussion of the country's politics since Union in 1910, a couple of brief chapters called "Living in South Africa," and then successive chapters on the different racial groups, as in the first book discussed. Mrs. Millin has been observing her country closely for many years, and her book has the advantage of being written by a single hand from a single viewpoint, with tone and approach unified. I would recommend it more strongly than *The South African Way of Life* to anyone interested in learning about South Africa, but do so with a certain amount of guilt. *The South African Way of Life* is sober, contains numerous tables of figures, and the writers refer to their authorities. Mrs. Millin's book, on the other hand, contains few references to her authorities; she is given to the mystery of Africa; and her history is inclined to be that of the great South African names—Kruger, Rhodes, and Smuts.

But the feel of the country is in her book to a greater extent than in the first book discussed; *The People of South Africa* tells far more than the other what it is like to live in South Africa. The reader would, however, be well advised to moderate in his own mind the effect of what he reads. Things are bad enough in the Union, but they are bad in a generally

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duller and more day-to-day manner than one would gather from this book, and most people are engaged, consciously at any rate, in simply going about their business: Mrs. Millin's prose style has an excessively portentous effect. And then one must add that Mrs. Millin's own race attitudes are not above suspicion—she seems to be a white South African by more than birth and residence. Some of her remarks on the Colored community are deplorable. And there is rather too much of this sort of thing: "The natives have long memories for grievances. It is as hard to win their forgiveness as their gratitude. The reason is that they lack civilisation. They have a sense of their own rights, but not of the rights of others. They will remember for years a trifling wrong or a deprivation. They will kill for a stolen grain-sack, for a mulcted sixpence."

Well—some might, but a great many others will not.

Chicago's Jewry

A PRICELESS HERITAGE. By MORRIS A. GUTSTEIN. Bloch. 488 pp. $6.00.

Reviewed by HERBERT J. GANS

FOR some time now, the historians have been urged by sociologists, economists, and their other colleagues in the social sciences to incorporate some of the latter's methods and materials into the study of history. These urgings seem to have had some effect on Jewish historians as well, for Morris A. Gutstein's history of 19th-century Chicago Jewry has as its purpose "to give a comprehensive and complete picture of the evolution of the local Jewish community in a sociological sense, and in light of the total economic, cultural, political, and social environment."

The author, a respected Chicago rabbi, deserves credit for attempting such a project with the little sociological data available, yet his attempt has been only partly successful. Except for a few excellent brief analyses, his history is primarily a chronological survey of the congregations and organizations which rose and sometimes fell, but almost always split and divided, in the course of the growth of Chicago's Jewish community from the first *minyan* in 1845 to a population of 80,000 in 1900.

From the author's material we learn—though it is never stated—that for all practical purposes, there were two Jewish communities in 19th-

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In commemoration of the American Jewish Tercentenary celebration, the Society is sponsoring an Historical Essay Contest among students of recognized undergraduate and graduate schools of higher learning. Essays are to be submitted on or before September 1, 1954. *Application form available upon request.*

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century Chicago, a German and an East European. The latter split off from the former just three years after the founding of the first congregation; thereafter the two communities exhibited all the differences in religious beliefs and practices, socio-economic conditions, and culture which previous studies of Jewish communities have uncovered. Rabbi Gutstein's history provides a better picture of the German Jews than of the East European Jews, in part because they seem to have left behind completer records of their activities.

Behind the impressive institutional façade of synagogues and organizations, occasional glimpses of the more informal life of the German Jews emerge from the liberal amount of primary source material included in the book, the fruit of the author's diligent research. There are many hints to be got, for example, from the constitutions and by-laws of the various congregations. These point to the existence of activities that the community sought to discourage, and to other activities which had perhaps been performed voluntarily at one time but now had to be legislated for and commanded. Thus, the bylaws of an early Jewish day school forbade children to leave in the afternoon to attend music or dancing school. One gathers that a significant number of German-Jewish parents wished their children to acquire these accomplishments; this in turn enables us to guess how speedily these parents had adopted status symbols of the upper and upper-middle classes of the time. The extremely detailed regulations providing for attendance at the funeral services of deceased members suggest that congregational solidarity was no longer strong enough to bring about such attendance voluntarily.

THE picture of the German Jews which can be pieced together from the various parts of this history bears at least a partial resemblance to that of American Jewry today. Within about three decades after their arrival, the German immigrants had become prosperous and secularized Jews. They built large synagogues (architecturally much like the well-to-do Protestant churches), staffed them with famous rabbis, but attended them much less regularly than these rabbis thought they should. (One rabbi, in fact, resigned because of his congregation's "apathy and lethargy"!) The author suggests that their very great charitable efforts were in part motivated by the guilt they felt for having departed from Jewish traditions. The German Jews also founded numerous social and cultural organizations and clubs; through these they participated not only in Jewish cultural activities, but also in those of the other culture (at first German, later American) of their milieu and day.

Their desire to rise socially soon led to a de-emphasizing of Jewish education; their sensitivity about their status in the eyes of the outside world was reflected in frequent attempts to disassociate themselves from their lower-class East European brethren. Rabbi Gutstein devotes an entire chapter to the story of the Jewish Training School, a philanthropic institution founded by German Jews to train the children of their East European co-religionists for a trade—so they would not take up the "despicable" peddling of their parents. The East European community, which had become the larger of the two even before the heavy immigration of the 1880's, kept to traditional ways much longer, though it included some elements that modeled themselves on the German Jews.

YET when the German Jews had first come to Chicago they had been Orthodox, poor, and peddlers themselves very often. By the 1870's, however, most of them had risen into the middle class. Their rise is symbolized by their choice of rabbis. The first rabbis were unordained men who conducted services, taught school, and acted as *shochetim* and *mohelim*; only on special occasions did they preach. They were generally hired for only a year, at the end of which they often took some sort of non-religious job.

Two decades later we find that most of the German Jewish rabbis are highly educated men whose function is preeminently to preach. As spiritual leaders of the Reform congregations, they reflected the prosperity, education, civic leadership, and high status in Jewish and secular Chicago to which their flock aspired. In 1857 the K.A.M. congregation advertised for a rabbi-preacher at an annual salary of $1,000; in the late 1880's the Sinai congregation was paying Dr. Emil G. Hirsch $12,000 a year.

One wonders why the preacher and the weekly sermon so quickly became the vital center of the service. The sermon then (and probably now) provided the rabbi an opportunity to address himself to contemporary concerns and

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needs amid the otherwise traditional and timeless themes of the service; it was perhaps the means by which this service was "adjusted" to the congregations' rapid change in religious attitudes.

A Chicagoan cannot but be impressed with how little seems to have changed in the Jewish community between 1870 and 1950. Many of the leading congregations, institutions, organizations, and families of the 19th century are still in positions of leadership today; the picture of a prosperous and secularized community seems scarcely to have altered. Yet this similarity is deceptive, for great transformations took place in the Chicago Jewish community between 1880 and 1920, in the course of the large-scale immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe. The size of the Jewish community increased from 10,000 in 1870 to 70,000 in 1890, eventually reaching today's figure of 300,000-350,000.

With the virtual disappearance today of all social and cultural distinctions between "German" and "East European" Jews, the two Jewish communities of Chicago have come together again; both seem to be developing in the general direction of increasing prosperity and acculturation in which German Jewry was moving in the late 19th century. Where that path leads remains to be seen.

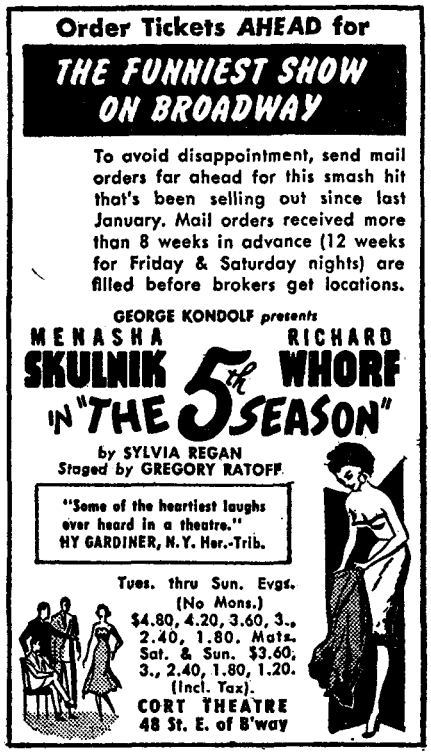
Anti-Utopia

THE JOKER. By JEAN MALAQUAIS. Doubleday. 319 pp. $3.95.

Reviewed by OTTO FRIEDRICH

IN MORE than a generation of nightmare novels, there have developed two main versions of the anti-utopia—that dream of a future state administered for the greatest ill of the greatest number. The one sort, represented by Aldous Huxley and George Orwell, concentrates on the coming superstate itself, and its characters are mainly designed to illustrate the mechanics of a society built from a coherent—and implicitly vicious—political theory. In the dream world of Franz Kafka, on the other hand, the horror of the future merges with that of the present, and the protagonist is trapped in a poisonous smog rather than seized by the tentacles of a political octopus.

Somewhere between these two versions comes "the City" of Jean Malaquais' new novel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The Joker. The inhabitants live in massive compounds of "four to five thousand apartments" spied on by "inspectors" who enforce the City's principle that one exists for the sake of "being one with the City." The police official's declaration that "Being is exactly what you call being no one" is paraphrased by the hero into "I crawl, therefore I am." Despite the paraphernalia of the anti-utopian superstate, however, Malaquais avoids both the logic and realism of detail that make *Brave New World* and *1984* so terrifying. Instead, he tries to imitate the atmosphere of Kafka by consistent "unrealism," or what one might call "logical illogicality." As in Kafka, the characters of *The Joker* appear and disappear with supernatural vagueness. Telephones ring inside bureau drawers and vanish shortly afterwards. A girl finds her father seized and her apartment ransacked by the police, who have left a giant metronome ticking insanely in one room and a Van Gogh hanging upside down in another.

Through the center of all this wanders the hero, the joker, Pierre Javelin, who makes a mistake in signing a document and finds that the police are after him for impersonation. His wife disappears, his job is taken away, his documents are unacceptable, he is losing his

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identity. This, it becomes apparent, is the center of Malaquais' concept of the anti-utopia. The target of his attack is conformism, the mindless, spineless anonymity already obvious in the contemporary world. This is scarcely a profound idea, however, and Malaquais moreover fails to analyze or describe it in any great detail. Instead of going beyond or even equaling Huxley—whose target was much the same —Malaquais falters at every climactic point into the subterfuge of creating "atmosphere" for its own sake.

Javelin finds his name blacklisted everywhere, but he temporarily overcomes this confusion by turning it into chaos: since he is hunted for impersonating himself, he takes identity papers from a girl and registers himself under her name. At every turn, Javelin is confronted by Dr. Babitch, the omniscient police official, waiting behind doors, demanding a confession, proving to Javelin that he does not exist because he is not "one with the City." All this is in the best tradition of the genre, and yet it makes less of an impression than many contemporary phenomena. A perceptive description of Grand Central Station or the Pentagon could be more frightening than anything in *The Joker*.

THE "individualism" of Malaquais' hero, which is supposed to leave the superstate tottering, is little more than a slightly imbecilic jauntiness. Poetry—Javelin drops his forbidden verses in random mailboxes—and sex provide the joker with what is described as the last laugh on the secret police. Typical of his "individualism" is a scene when Javelin feels hot and uncomfortable during a questioning by Dr. Babitch; he goes into the bathroom, sticks his head in the toilet and flushes it. "You consider yourself witty, whereas you are merely lugubrious," Dr. Babitch says, a remark that hits the book as well as the hero. We are told, finally, that the inspectors have somehow overlooked a hotel maid who has been sporadically nursing the hero into pneumatic bliss and will presumably enable him to retain his identity. This is Javelin's triumph, but one's sympathies tend to slip over to the side of the secret police.

In his murky atmosphere, hints of symbolism, and surrealistic narrative, Malaquais constantly reminds one of Kafka, but Malaquais is weakest just where Kafka is strongest—in the quality of his experience of the nightmare. Kafka's "unreality" is genuine and as real as Orwell's realism. With *The Joker*, one simply feels that a writer decided to dramatize his rather meager ideas about identity and individualism; it is all a working out and working up of something, a figure of speech and not the real thing, a joke that doesn't come off.

"We Are All Liberals"

WOODROW WILSON AND THE PROGRESSIVE ERA. By ARTHUR LINK. Harper. 331 pp. $5.00.

Reviewed by ALAN F. WESTIN

AT HIS inaugural in 1913, Woodrow Wilson might have summed up his age by paraphrasing Jefferson and saying that "we are all liberals; we are all progressives." For Wilson of the reformist New Freedom, Theodore Roosevelt of the insurgent New Nationalism, and the native Socialist Eugene Debs had, together, polled over eleven million votes that year, as against a scant three million for the unhappy William Howard Taft. (And Taft himself, as Professor Link points out, would have denied emphatically that he was a conservative in

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1912.) In those days "liberal" and "progressive" were words with political sex appeal. A decade of muckraking had left the business ethic discredited and Old Guard politics suspect; millions of Americans went out to "stand at Armaggedon and battle for the Lord," with no less than three platforms of protest to choose among. Even George Perkins, J. P. Morgan's partner and the financier of United States Steel, joined social workers like Jane Addams, curmudgeons like Harold Ickes, and radicals like John Dewey in singing "Onward, Christian Soldiers" before adopting the most advanced reform program that had been presented since the Populist upheaval. The fortunes of reform looked bright indeed.

Yet a short eight years later, reform was dead and the Progressives were scattered to the four political winds. Some sailed for the Left Bank and renounced politics; some became high-priced lawyers for the corporations and utilities; some rejected reform and embraced a Marxist theology which led to Stalinism. Those who tried to uphold the old Progressive banner found themselves ignored by the majority of the American public; they cast their protest ballots for an isolated La Follette rather than trying to select the "more progressive" of Calvin Coolidge and John W. Davis.

THE Progressive Era clearly has a special interest and relevance for our own generation, which has just emerged from another great American reform period. A searching examination of Progressivism might help illuminate our present political situation and the nature of American politics. Unfortunately, Arthur Link gives us no such study in his *Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era.* He has produced a very fine vignette of the pre-war Wilson, and an incisive study of American diplomacy during this period. His chapters on mission-of-democracy adventures in South America, U. S.-Mexican relations, the neutrality and preparedness controversies, and the seesaw of American-British and American-German antagonisms are well done. When he concludes that before 1917 neither Wilson nor the American people viewed the First World War as a moral struggle, and that neither banker investments nor an anti-Prussian dedication was responsible for our intervention, Professor Link helps us toward a correct and properly complex understanding of a much misinterpreted and oversimplified page of American history. Yet something more is desired and expected from his volume.

One doesn't like to criticize an author for not having written another book. But I must say that such is my feeling about this volume. The jacket proclaims it to be one of the first in the New American Nation Series of Harper Brothers, edited by Henry S. Commager and Richard Morris of Columbia University; the purpose of the series is to make a "fresh and judicious appraisal of the whole of the American past" in the light of the advances in scholarship that have been made since the appearance of the original American Nation Series. But Professor Link's volume on *Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era* is mostly about Wilson and Wilsonian diplomacy, and slights the American scene upon which the Progressive drama was enacted; his work is chiefly notable as an earnest of the excellence of his forthcoming biography of Woodrow Wilson.

WRITING to a friend in 1912, the philosopher

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of the New Nationalism, Herbert Croly, declared triumphantly that "the Progressives are now talking a doctrine that is certain to cast a shadow across all our tomorrows." This doctrine, which was one of pursuing Jeffersonian objectives by Hamiltonian means, has indeed cast such a shadow. The major schools of American liberalism stand divided today on just the issues which divided Wilson and T.R.: How far should the government go in remodeling the social system? Should giant corporate enterprise be "busted" or "adjusted"? Was it possible to wed ideals to power in a foreign policy viable for a democratic nation in an undemocratic world? Could the high-minded reform impulse be accommodated to the necessities of "practical" politics? To the casual student, the New Freedom of Wilson and the New Nationalism of T. R. would seem to represent two distinct and opposed plans for reforming America. Yet the striking question which a close study of the Progressive Era raises is whether the New Nationalism was not then and is not now an inevitable course (and if so, what elements of choice still remain within the New Nationalist framework). Did not Wilson, the bitter anti-Hamiltonian who campaigned to make the race for profit fair for the small contestant, find himself forced by events to enact virtually the entire New Nationalist platform by 1916? And, twenty years later, did not another Jeffersonian, Franklin Roosevelt, find, when the mild adjustment phase of his first two years had failed, that he had to embark on a program of Hamiltonian policy which would have warmed the heart of Herbert Croly? Could Wilson (or Franklin Roosevelt) have chosen any other action to meet the needs of reform?

It is obvious that the Progressive Era has much to tell us about the roots of American reform and the attitudes which underlie the movements of American foreign policy. It is a pity that a book demonstrating such mastery of sources and primary materials as Professor Link's could not have included a really searching study of a crucial period in American history.

Book Reviewers in This Issue

Irving Kristol, formerly managing editor of Commentary, is now co-editor (with Stephen Spender) of the monthly magazine *Encounter*, published in London.

Dan Jacobson lives in Kimberley, South Africa. The most recent of his numerous contributions to Commentary was "A Visit from Royalty," in our issue for February 1954.

Herbert J. Gans is on the staff of the planning department of the University of Pennsylvania. Many readers will remember his study of the Jewish community of "Park Forest," a new suburban community in the Midwest, published in Commentary April 1951.

Otto Friedrich, a young writer living in New York, is at work on a book about the pessimistic tradition in American culture.

Alan F. Westin is a graduate of the Harvard Law School and, at present, an instructor in the department of government at Harvard.

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This *I Believe*

By Eric Hoffer*

. . . . . "SELF-CONTEMPT, however vague, sharpens our eyes for the imperfections of others. We usually strive to reveal in others the blemishes we hide in ourselves. Thus when the frustrated congregate in a mass movement, the air is heavy-laden with suspicion. There is prying and spying, tense watching and a tense awareness of being watched. The surprising thing is that this pathological mistrust within the ranks leads not to dissension but to strict conformity. Knowing themselves continually watched, the faithful strive to escape suspicion by adhering zealously to prescribed behavior and opinion. Strict orthodoxy is as much the result of mutual suspicion as of ardent faith.

"Mass movements make extensive use of suspicion in their machinery of domination. The rank-and-file within the Nazi party were made to feel that they were continually under observation and were kept in a permanent state of uneasy conscience and fear. Fear of one's neighbors, one's friends and even one's relatives seems to be the rule within all mass movements. Now and then innocent people are deliberately accused and sacrificed in order to keep suspicion alive. Suspicion is given a sharp edge by associating all opposition within the ranks with the enemy threatening the movement from without. This enemy—the indispensable devil of every mass movement—is omnipresent. He plots both outside and inside the ranks of the faithful. It is his voice that speaks through the mouth of the dissenter, and the deviationists are his stooges. If anything goes wrong within the movement, it is his doing. It is the sacred duty of the true believer to be suspicious. He must be constantly on the lookout for saboteurs, spies and traitors."

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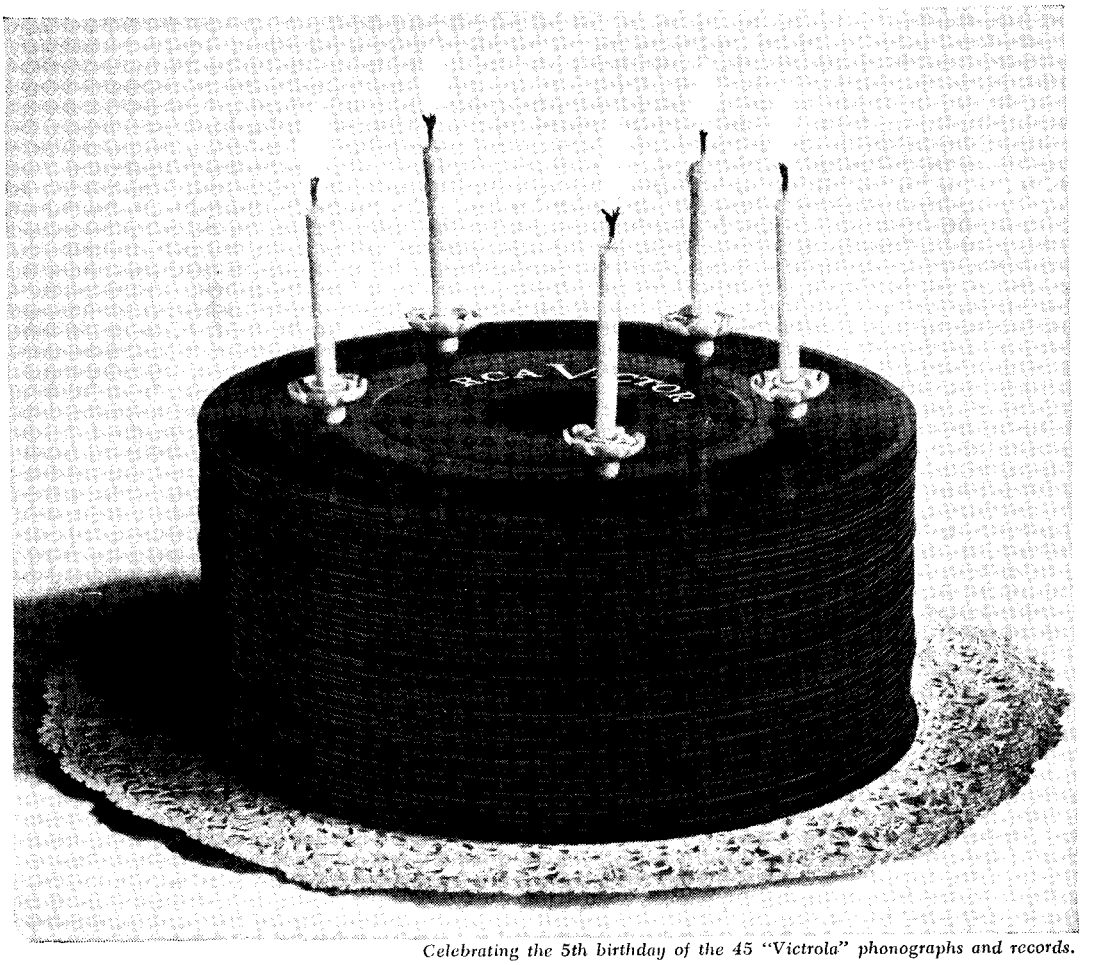

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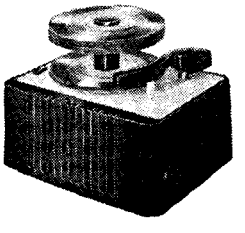

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